

CHRISTIAN COURIER

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made visible ... see p. 15



55th year of publication

Church-based programs seek to combat African AIDS epidemic

KIGALI, Rwanda (EP) — In the face of what World Relief President Clive Calver calls "Africa's greatest disaster," World Relief, the international assistance arm of the U.S.-based National Association of Evangelicals, has launched a church-based AIDS program in Africa to help churches care for the sick, educate and counsel the healthy, and minister to children whose AIDS-stricken parents have died from the disease.

Grim statistics in Africa

A UNAIDS program report released June 27 included grim statistics showing the scope of the disease on the African population. According to the report, one in five adult Africans is infected with the HIV virus and 70 per cent of the world's new cases of HIV infections in the next year will be on this continent. AIDS is now the

number one killer in sub-Saharan Africa.

World Relief reports that 11 per cent of the adult population of Rwanda is infected with HIV. In Malawi, 16 per cent are infected, and in other countries, the infection rate is as high as 25 per cent. South Africa alone is home to more than 4.2 million HIV/AIDS patients.

Health care at critical low

Health care services in these countries are at a critical low. Doctors have been leaving the poorer nations for countries that are better developed and can afford their services. Because of this, hospitals have been scrambling to fill vacant positions. For example, the Christian Hospital Association of Malawi is still seeking to fill over 3,000 of the 7,000 staff positions vacated last year.

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JUL 25 2000



GIDEON MENDEL/NETWORK-SABA

An African AIDS victim being cared for.

For years, most African churches hesitated to become involved in addressing AIDS because of the cultural taboos on

talking about sexuality. Sources report this is rapidly changing.

"Only the church can approach AIDS with hope," says World's

Relief's Calver. "Not only do African churches have the local presence and moral authority to address behavioral issues, but they have a unique message of hope to offer to people living with AIDS."

A biblical mandate

Churches now say that not only do they have a biblical mandate for compassionate care to those dying and a message of prevention often missing from secular campaigns, but they have an infrastructure necessary to make a difference in the spread of HIV/AIDS. In sub-Saharan Africa, the church network reaches across most of the subcontinent, and churches play a significant role in influencing behavior. With their concept of volunteerism, churches already have the framework needed to unleash forces to save

See RWANDAN page 2...

Ferry carrying 500 refugees from Indonesian island lost at sea



DETA ALANGKARA/AP, AFP

Relatives of passengers on the sunken ferry wait anxiously for news.

MANADO, Indonesia (EP) — An overloaded ferry carrying refugees of sectarian violence from the Moluccan Islands in

Indonesia sank on June 29. The captain of the *Cahaya Bahari* ferry last radioed in that the ship was taking on water during a violent

storm before contact was lost. Four days later, fishermen pulled 10 people and one body out of a debris field 100 km from the last known position of the ferry. The four women and six men, ranging in ages from 12 to 29, are the only known survivors of Indonesia's worst sea disaster in two decades. Officials say the ferry was carrying over 500 passengers when it sank, but was equipped with only 300 life jackets.

More than 480 passengers and crew members of the ferry are still missing. The majority of passengers were leaving the Moluccan islands after months of tension and violence between Muslims and Christians flared up in recent weeks. (Another 10 deaths from fighting between rival factions were reported on July 3.)

On June 23, the police barracks, a Christian university, a hospital

and at least three churches on the nearby island of Ambon were attacked and burned by Muslim jihad fighters. According to eyewitnesses, military troops and vehicles were used against Christians during these attacks. Similar attacks have caused thousands to flee from the Moluccas to nearby islands not yet affected by the conflict.

Ferry traffic in the area is unusually heavy as the exodus of refugees from the islands continues.

New Tribes Mission reports that several believers from a church in Manado were aboard the ferry, as well as 13 pastors and church leaders headed to a religious convention. The fate of those Christians is still unknown.

Christian vs. Muslim battle continues in Indonesia

JAKARTA, Indonesia (EP) — On June 27, Indonesia's military ordered fresh troops to be sent to replace 1,400 troops stationed in the Moluccan islands, the setting of bloody fighting between Christians and Muslims. The 18-month battle between the two

religious groups has centred around Ambon and Halmahera, where recent fighting claimed 168 lives, most of them Christians.

Christians in the area have charged that the military is sympathetic to the Muslim

See INDONESIAN page 2...

News

Rwandan church leaders commit to fight AIDS

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Africa's future.

"Leaders now realize that they must make every effort to fight this global pandemic," says Jean Ndahayo, a lay counselor with the Baptist Union in Cyangugu, Rwanda. "If the church sleeps instead of attacking the problem, it will become nothing but an empty building with all its people lost."

The turning point

The turning point for the church in Rwanda came in 1998, after approximately 50 Rwandan church leaders met to discuss AIDS and commit together to fight it. In a public statement to the government, they wrote that they had "the belief systems, moral authority and local presence necessary for effectiveness in HIV/AIDS prevention and care." But the church leaders acknowledged that they were ill-equipped for the task and asked World Relief for the training and guidance they needed.

In response, World Relief is now working with churches in Rwanda, Malawi and



GIDEON MENDEL/NETWORK-SABA
A young African AIDS sufferer.

Mozambique to help them develop programs to care for the sick and orphans and to educate and counsel the healthy. The organization is also producing badly needed culturally appropriate and biblically based curriculum and teaching aids. These new initiatives in South Africa and Burkina Faso will begin later this year.

Besides church-based programs, World Relief will initiate a new project aimed at helping AIDS patients right at their bedsides. A unique manual, published by African churches and World Relief is for average Africans who are providing care in their homes for those living and dying with AIDS.

Children often caregivers

The target audience for the manual is children between the ages of 10 and 12 years of age, "because tragically, they are often the primary caregivers to those dying of AIDS in their homes in Africa," says Debbie Dortzbach, World Relief's director of HIV/AIDS programs and pioneer of the project. "While the church is doing the work visiting, caring, comforting, they expressed to us their ignorance of good care."

The elderly, who are less literate, are also primary caregivers. The simple language, photos and diagrams in the manual help the less literate persons,

regardless of their age.

"This manual will not mildew on mud floors," Dortzbach adds. "The demand will be overwhelming because the need for home care is overwhelming, and the resources for meeting that need outside the home are nonexistent nearly everywhere."

World Relief will work through the existing church network to train church volunteers in the practical uses of the manual and how to locate those in their communities who will need the home training they can provide.

Although specifically designed for Rwanda, the manual contains guidelines applicable to all of Africa and will be adapted for use in Malawi, Mozambique, South Africa and other countries.

So far, the church's influence among those stricken with AIDS in these countries is growing. "I would have committed suicide if I had not accepted Christ," confessed Immaculate Nyiramande, a 30-year-old woman who became infected when she was raped

during the 1994 genocide campaign in Rwanda. She often experienced rejection from people when they learned she was HIV positive, but through a unique Christian HIV/AIDS fellowship group, Nyiramande realized God's love, before her death due to the disease.

Church under-resourced

"It is tragic that the church in Africa is under-resourced and ill-equipped for the enormity of the task," says Calver. "They have taken this on, but I believe that the breadth of their impact relates to our response."

"Despite this catastrophe, AIDS is also potentially the single biggest factor in the growth of the African church today. As 23 million Africans face death, many are finding Jesus and seeking to use the remainder of their lives for Him," concluded Calver.

Further information on World Relief's HIV/AIDS programs in Africa can be found on their web site: www.worldrelief.org.

Indonesian Christians report Muslim jihad troops

... continued from page 1

factions and has actually stood side-by-side with Muslims as they attacked Christians. In an apparent affirmation of this charge, Marshall Garito Usodo, military spokesman, told Reuters that the soldiers had been stationed on the islands for too long and had "become involved emotionally" in the fighting.

Indonesia's government blames the fighting on an influx of nonresidents into Ambon, and has blocked more travelers from entering the Moluccas. However, Christians report thousands of trained Muslim jihad troops, known as the Laskar Jihad or Holy War, have entered the island in the past month to begin a "major military offensive" against Christians. Many enter the country unarmed, but are then supplied with weapons already on the island. Military ammunition magazines have been raided and emptied during the fighting.

On June 23, the Ambon police barracks, a Christian university, a hospital and at least three churches were attacked and burned by jihad fighters. According to eyewitnesses, military troops and vehicles were used against Christians during these attacks.

Troops and police who refused to aid the Muslims were reportedly shot or beaten.

Ambon has been declared a "civil emergency" by the federal government and curfews have been enforced by island police in an attempt to defuse the fighting. Political and social life in the Moluccas has come to a standstill with the closing of most government buildings and trade centres.

Defense Minister Juwono Sudarsono claims the fighting is an attempt to disturb the fragile power of Indonesian president Abdurrahman Wahid and undermine the fledgling democratic government.

Little action has been taken by the U.S. to stop the fighting; the Presbyterian Church is considering a call on the American government to take action. On June 27, the church's committee on global mission submitted a resolution to their general assembly requesting that the church ask President Clinton and Secretary of State Madeleine Albright to pressure the Indonesian government for an end to "military support for attacks upon the Christians on Ambon." The resolution also requests that the predominantly Muslim country support freedom of all religions.

Milestone reached in mapping human genome

(Religion Today) — Human beings are more than the sum of their genes, theologians, ethicists, and scientists are warning.

Genes alone don't determine human nature, because other genes, one's environment, and free will all play a role, they said. To say that man is only what his genes determine is bad science and bad theology.

Theologians and others were offering cautions recently as scientists from the United States and Britain announced a milestone that was likened to man's walk on the moon: they have created a map of the approximately 100,000 genes in the human body, or human genome.

Scientists still have a lot of research left to understand the map, but they expect that it will create a new era in 21st century human biology and medicine. The pace of discoveries in bio-medicine is likely to increase. Scientists are working toward treatments that repair or replace faulty genes, fixing the underlying causes of hundreds of diseases including heart disease, cancer, and Alzheimer's. Understanding the genome also could help prevent illness and eventually enhance human functions such as hearing or sight, or making people taller.

The information will help humans understand themselves better, scientists say. Critics agree, but say the glamor of gene therapy



An illustration from Andreas Vesalius' 'On the Fabric of the Human Body' (1543).

Doctors will be able to screen unborn babies for a new range of deficiencies long before they've developed cures. That could present dilemmas for some parents, who will be presented with the choice of aborting a baby that doctors believed would develop a genetic disease later in life.

'Gravely immoral'

"There is the real concern of misusing science to generate 'designer babies' with preferred genetic traits," said Rev. Joseph Howard, a Catholic priest who directs the American Bio-ethics Advisory Commission. This is "gravely immoral since it fails to show unconditional respect for all human life without exception." It is already common practice to generate human embryos by in vitro fertilization and test them immediately for abnormal genes. "Once found and tested, these human beings are destroyed," Howard said.

"It's the difference between using genetics to correct something that has gone wrong and using them to create something considered perfect," Steve Jenkins, a spokesman for the Church of England, told Reuters. "The idea of designing humans from scratch along with the prospect of an enormous increase in abortion is not the world *See DESIGNER BABIES p. 3...*

News

U.S. Supreme Court strikes down state ban of partial-birth abortion

WASHINGTON, D.C. (EP) — By the narrowest of margins June 28, the U.S. Supreme Court struck down a state law banning partial-birth abortions. By a 5-4 vote, the Court said Nebraska's law violated women's right to abortion by imposing an "undue burden" on their choice.

The ruling does not automatically invalidate similar laws in 29 other states, but it increases the chance that those laws will be struck down by lower courts.

Brutal abortion method

In partial-birth abortion (also known as dilation and extraction), the unborn child is pulled feet-first through the birth canal. While the head is still inside the mother, the doctor stabs the baby in the skull, suctions out its brains, then crushes the skull before completing delivery.

The Court said Nebraska's law banning the late-term procedure was too broad, and could be used to prosecute abortionists who use a similar method during the second trimester of a pregnancy. Writing for the majority, Associate Justice Stephen G. Breyer said, "All those who perform abortion procedures using that [similar] method must fear prosecution, conviction and imprisonment. The result is an undue burden upon a woman's right to make an abortion decision. We must consequently find the statute unconstitutional."

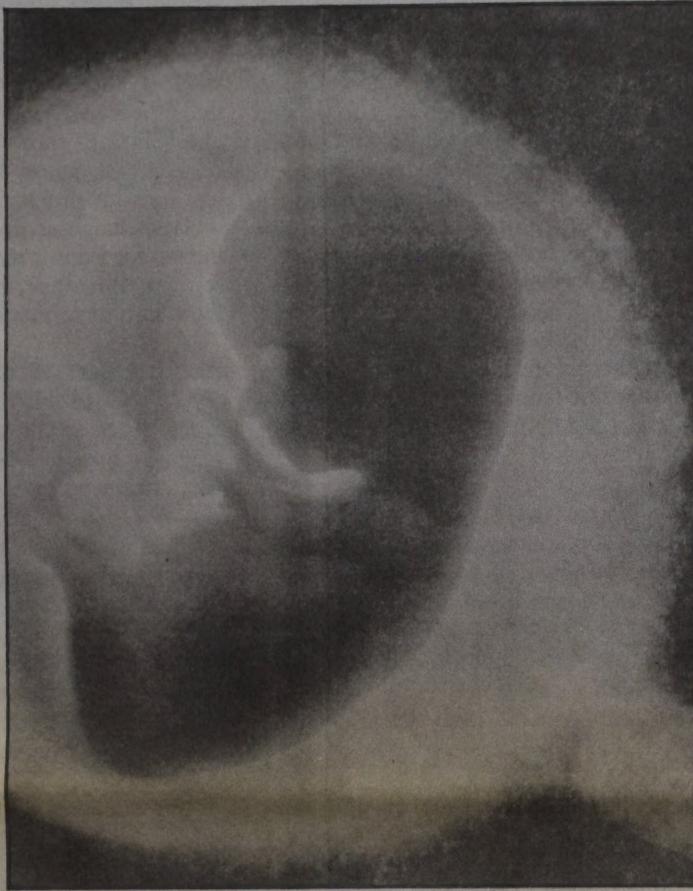
Joining Breyer in the majority were Associate Justices Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Sandra Day O'Connor, David Souter and John Paul Stevens. This was the first abortion decision for Breyer and Ginsburg.

O'Connor, who was the critical swing vote on this issue, wrote a concurring opinion saying that some version of a partial-birth abortion ban could be found constitutional if it were written more narrowly and included exemptions to preserve the "life and health" of the mother. Pro-life activists say that "health" exemptions have been interpreted so broadly that they are virtually abortion on demand.

Dissenting judges

Dissenting were Chief Justice William Rehnquist and Associate Justices Anthony Kennedy, Antonin Scalia and Clarence Thomas.

Thomas, writing for himself, Rehnquist and Scalia, criticized the Court for straying beyond what is required by the U.S. Constitution. "Today we are told



GANDEE VASCAN/STONE

that 30 states are prohibited from banning one rarely used form of abortion that they believe to border on infanticide," he said. "It is clear that the Constitution does not compel this result."

Horrific pain inflicted

The Christian Medical Association condemned the decision, saying it allows the inflicting of horrific pain on developing infants. Dr. David Stevens, executive director of the association, noted, "The Court today decided to allow inflicting pain on developing infants that would never be countenanced by any medical review team for human experimentation."

Stevens continued, "This decision will go down in history alongside the infamous Dred Scott decision of 1857, when the Court decided that African-Americans were not persons but pieces of property. Once again, an autocratic Court has misinterpreted the Constitution by removing the inalienable right to life of a baby just moments away from birth."

Partial-birth abortion is a sharply divisive issue around the nation. Democratic presidential hopeful Al Gore supports abortion, including partial-birth abortion; Republican presidential hopeful

George W. Bush opposes abortion, including partial-birth abortion. Responding to the Supreme Court's decision, Bush said, "States should have the right to enact reasonable laws and restrictions, particularly concerning the brutal practice of partial-birth abortion. The American people can take steps to protect children who are in the process of being born, and they should have that right. I hope to be able to come up with a law that meets the constitutional scrutiny. And, unlike Al Gore, I pledge to fight for a ban on partial-birth abortion."

In April the U.S. House of Representatives voted 287-141 to outlaw partial-birth abortions. While that's enough of a margin to override President Bill Clinton's promised veto, the bill's supporters lack a wide enough majority in the Senate.

For a quick Letter to the Editor, send e-mail to:
ceditor@aol.com
or
Fax to 905-682-8313

CCA looks for new relations with other Christians, people of other faiths

INDONESIA (REC) — The Christian Conference of Asia (CCA) met in Tomohon in Indonesia during the early part of June. The CCA, which is an ecumenical body of more than 100 Protestant, Anglican, and Orthodox churches and church councils from Pakistan to Aotearoa, New Zealand, is Asia's main ecumenical body. During their 11th General Assembly, the gathering sought to address three major issues: improving relations with other faiths, restructuring in order to survive, and discussing threats facing religious minorities.

The conference opened with a call for Asia's Christians to "develop a more elaborate theology of how to live together with peoples of other faiths." Dr. W.R. Roeroe challenged the assembly to find ways to live together harmoniously with peoples of other faith by saying that this is a particularly sensitive time in the life of the local churches and of Indonesia as a whole. Recent history in Indonesia has seen a lot of religious hostility that has caused much death and destruction. The assembly spent time looking for ways to build links with non-member churches such as the Roman Catholic, Evangelical, and Pentecostal churches.

Sweeping structural changes

Another vital decision caused sweeping changes in the structure and organization of the CCA in order to make it so the organization can survive with less financial means. The proposals have been in discussion for the past two years. The changes are extensive. The reforms will reduce the number of full time staff from 28 to 19. The changes will also create three main program areas each supervised by a committee. These changes will replace the nine current committees and six working groups and task forces.

Not every one was in favor of the changes. In order for the proposal to work, the women and youth desks at the CCA would have to be combined into one and would no longer have any full time staff. After much debate, the assembly agreed to maintain the women and youth desks but their continuation is subject to the securing of funds.

Finally, the topics of the persecution of religious minorities took the stage. There has been concern about the activities of India's Hindu Fundamentalists and the blasphemy law in Pakistan. The CCA called on the governments of both India and Pakistan to provide "adequate protection to Christians and other minority communities" and to abolish "laws and regulations that are intended to restrict religious freedom." Other statements made by the CCA assembly included a call to the Indonesian government to enforce the rule of law in the Maluku province where violence has erupted between Christians and Muslims, a call for the "immediate cessation of hostilities in Sri Lanka, and encouraged Asian churches to join the campaign for debt cancellation to assist the world's poorest countries.

Designer babies

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 we want."

The world experimented with eugenics in the 1920s and 1930s, including doing mass sterilizations of people thought to be genetically defective, and that has made scientists uneasy about using technology this way. Jenkins warned that such use of this technology would benefit few people and could turn into the sort of eugenics practiced in Nazi Germany.

The complexity of genetic

science may lead people to God. Suzanne Holland, an ethicist from the University of Puget Sound in Tacoma, Wash., told the Monitor. "The combination of genes with the interplay of the environment is so magnificent and contains in it so much mystery that to my mind it's more reason for belief in God," she said. "We might come to see God as far more involved in the world than the Newtonian mechanistic view of a God that sets up everything and steps out of the way."

Editorial

Humor issue: an apology

Harry der Nederlanden

After the last issue — the humor issue — some of you, perhaps most of you, will be expecting me to beg, plead and grovel for forgiveness; to take it all back and never to be naughty ever again. Reformed folk like me prefer to write essays on topics like "Humor in the Bible," which are received quite well, but to write humor that touches on topics of faith and religion... well, that's another thing altogether. So this is not an apology in the sense of saying I'm sorry; it is an apologeta, an impenitent defense.

Humor wears big floppy shoes, has a red nose, and walks like a cross between a stork and a giraffe. Humor is rude, raucous, raunchy, rash, rambunctious. But Reformed?

Can humor be Reformed?

No, of course, it isn't Christian or Reformed just because it's humor. But can humor be Reformed, that is, without becoming meaningless or cloying or dull? Must it carefully stay away from piety and religion to be acceptable? Must it erect a protective fence around that which is most central and most important in our lives? Or are there forms of humor whose very duty it is to skewer pretensions that surround religion, seeking to keep it inviolate?

There are, to be sure, times to get dressed up and even to participate in lofty rituals to stand before God in quiet solemnity. The trouble with getting all dressed up and solemn and high-minded is that by so doing we are often seeking to make ourselves appear more important and admirable, not just to God but also to

ourselves and our fellows. Especially those of us who are always seeking the high road and who presume to speak with familiarity about justice, truth, mercy, love and peace as if they were our bosom buddies need occasionally to take a pratfall, to step in a pail of slops or get a noodle up the nose.

Humor dishevels us. It is irreverent. Humor reveals the discrepancy between who we pretend to be and who we are. It discomfits us. Humor pops our buttons, yanks at our britches, snags our ankles. The ideal reality we have carefully cobbled, hammered, stitched, glued, welded and riveted into place to exhibit our virtues and achievements is suddenly torn away.

Often that horrifies, embarrasses, saddens, dismays and even depresses us. Tragic stories also expose the discrepancy between the world as it is and an ideal order. But in tragedy that ideal order is not a human fabrication, a fancy suit tailored to cover a potbelly and knobby knees; it is a divinely ordained order that levels those who transgress against it.

Humor brings us down to earth

Humor levels in another way: not by putting us under the earth but by bringing us down to earth. It reminds us that when all is said and done, when all our shirts are stuffed, chests puffed up, and heads swollen, we are still after all finite, bodily, mortal beings subject to similar ailments and follies.

Yet, this doesn't explain why we sometimes rage or weep at the discrepancies we see in life and at other times smile or burst into laughter. Some deep thinkers have suggested that there are contrasting worldviews or profoundly differing points of view behind the serious and the comic. This seems to be belied by experience, however. Don't we often laugh most hilariously at very serious moments, even out of the depths of tragedy? And I'm not just thinking of those occasions when we are constrained by social convention to appear sober, such as when we're in church, and are suddenly seized by the giggles.

When I was about 15 or so, I was sitting in one of the wings of the church listening attentively to a pastor I liked, when in the first bench of the other wing I noticed that one of the older members of our congregation was having a hard time staying awake. "Older" in those days meant he was 35 - 40, because it was a church of immigrants. He worked six days a week, doing heavy physical labor out of doors, so it wasn't uncommon to see him dozing off.

Beside him sat his youngest — a blond, curly haired little boy about four years old. He, too, had noticed Father dozing off. Father's head nodded forward a little and then jerked back. Next time, Father's head nodded forward two notches before jerking back upright. The blond head of the little boy, looking up at the dark, shaggy nodding head of his father, bobbed along in perfect harmony.

Did you ever notice that when you're nodding off, your neck seems to contain a cogged wheel? Every nod seems equally spaced? That's how it went. By mathematical increments. Each time the father's head went one nod further before returning to the vertical, and the little boy seemed wholly engrossed in his study of fatherly nodding, his head bobbing along with Father's.

At last, in the little boy's estimation, Father's head nodded one cog too far, and as the big chin came down, the boy's little fist shot up right under it. And so did

Father — he shot up right off his seat, eyes wide with shock.

I'm afraid I didn't hear much of the rest of the sermon. Every time I got my laughter under control, I'd look up and see the blond curly head, my body would start shaking again. Even when I didn't look up, suddenly the bench would start shaking, and I noticed that others had been watching the same comic drama unfold and they were having the same struggle I was. I suspect that almost the entire right wing where I sat was rocking with suppressed laughter.

True, laughter does distract us from the serious things, for I don't remember a word of that Sunday's sermon. But, then, how many of the hundreds, no, thousands of sermons we've heard do we remember?

Playing dirty tricks on humor

We tend to think of humor and laughter in these terms — as a distraction, a brief abandonment of serious purpose, a fling, an escape, a deviation from our upright posture. I suppose, in a sense, it is. To "save" this part of our humanity by seeking to endow it with an underlying serious purpose strikes me as a dirty trick. But maybe playing dirty tricks on humor is appropriate.

Psychologists and doctors tell us laughter heals and lengthens life. That's not why we laugh, of course. Those are only accidental benefits. Yet, laughter is good for us, I believe, because it touches on something essential to our created humanity.

Laughter is a spontaneous act of irresponsibility. To be responsible is, to be sure, a virtue. Reformed folk have always been very responsible. When we assume too much responsibility, however, we succumb to a form of pride. Everything depends on what we do: on how we think and how we conduct ourselves every moment of the day. We become our own policeman and jailer, keeping close tabs not only on ourselves but also on others. Every deviation threatens to become a rent in the fabric of piety, a step onto a slippery slope. We can't let down our guard; we are gripped by anxiety, tension, stress, anger, frustration.

Then someone misspeaks. The institution of language crumbles, reveals some incongruity. And we burst into laughter. Someone else adds a wisecrack, and we laugh some more. Suddenly, the tension is gone, the atmosphere is refreshed as by a shower on a hot, dusty day.

We've let go for a moment, tumbled out of a framework in which we're responsible for upholding the good order of the world and fall into a world where upholding order is someone else's business. In spite of ourselves, we relapse and relax into another order that makes our anxious assumption of responsibility appear ridiculous. Laughter prompts us to recognize our frailty and foolishness and surrender ourselves to our Creator and Redeemer.

Not everyone follows that prompting to its ultimate end, to be sure. Everything creaturely can be and has been perverted. But the capacity to laugh at ourselves is a God-given one; to be contemptuous of it is to be contemptuous of something God has implanted in us.

So I do not apologize for my attempts at humor, even though some of it was downright silly and sophomoric. I only apologize that I wasn't able to make you laugh longer and louder and with more Calvinistic abandon.

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EDITORIAL TEAM & PRODUCTION STAFF
Associate Editor: Harry der Nederlanden ccdernd@aol.com;
Reporter, Layout: Alan Doerksen ccjournal@aol.com;
Circulation Manager: Grace Bowman ccsubscript@aol.com;
Accounts Manager: Marsha Emke ccadpromo@aol.com

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Christian Courier
4-261 Martindale Rd., St. Catharines, ON, L2W 1A1
Tel: (905) 682-8311; 1-800-969-4838
Fax: (905) 682-8313;
E-mail: cceditor@aol.com
Publications Mail Registration No. 09375

Letters

Stop bashing Harris

Regarding the article "Needed: conscientious objection to Ontario's war against the poor" (June 12).

I strongly object to Mr. Vandezande's bashing of the Harris government. Too many do that already. Mr. Harris is doing what he promised, reducing the huge debt the N.D.P. saddled Ontario with, and I support him wholeheartedly in his efforts.

If there is no money in the kitty, you cannot spend it on more costly social programs, unless you borrow it, and that costs even

more to the taxpayers. The more you tax people, the poorer they get.

Harris may have made some mistakes, but nobody is perfect. He is doing a good job. Besides, how many really poor people do we have in Canada?

Many consider themselves poor when they have no money for a vacation or a second car or T.V. It's when you go hungry and have no winter coat that you are really poor. And there is help available. There is the Salvation Army to turn to, Scots Mission,

foodbanks, churches. Clothes can be bought for next to nothing at yard sales, thrift shops, etc. There is no need for anyone to sleep in the streets of Toronto unless they prefer to.

The "poor" are well looked after in this country. Don't they get their taxes back? We ourselves once dipped below the poverty line and promptly got our taxes reimbursed, much to our embarrassment. People on welfare can buy fancy cars. They have subsidized housing, and get a host of benefits.

I just hope that Harris will not get worn

down by the griping of his opponents and give in. Blame Harris for everything – even for the water problem in Walkerton. Ridiculous! As if the town leaders and the citizens could not have the wells tested themselves when there was a problem.

We should support the good man at the helm. Or would you sooner have the N.D.P. back, Mr. Vandezande? Or, God save us, the liberals?

Dena Glass
Kleinburg, Ont.

Are we stereotyping the poor?

We invited a representative of CPJ to clarify the plight of the poor in Ontario:

Dena Glass protests Gerald Vandezande's call to conscience in response to the Harris Government's tax and spending cuts. Her letter reveals the profound misperceptions many Ontarians hold about poverty and how government policies have affected the poor.

"People on welfare can buy fancy cars," claims Mrs. Glass. In fact, if you own a car worth more than \$5,000 you must sell it before being eligible to receive welfare. Even before the Harris government cut social assistance rates by 22 per cent in 1995, welfare income was barely enough to cover rent and other necessities – let alone buy a fancy car.

Now a social assistance cheque often doesn't even cover rent.

Similarly, she claims: "There is no need for anyone to sleep in the streets of Toronto, unless they prefer it." In 1998, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities declared homelessness a national disaster. One in four tenant households spends over half of their income on housing and are at risk of homelessness.

Affordable housing shortage

Upon taking office in 1995, the Harris government stopped building affordable housing projects. Even private builders have admitted that they can't meet the desperate need for affordable housing. People

working for low income or receiving social assistance can't afford the rents required. That's why government must act.

Mrs. Glass should check with the agencies she mentioned as being sufficient for the poor. She will find that emergency shelters are crowded. That many people in shelters and at food banks either have low-paid jobs or no source of income at all since they've been cut off welfare. That 40 per cent of food bank users are children. That the fastest growing population of homeless are families with children.

Where will we be in a recession?

This is all during an economic boom. Where will we be during the next recession?

Yes, we need to reduce our public debt. But there are different ways to do that. By cutting social programs, the Harris Government has imposed the burden on the poor, children and the sick. It chose to cut taxes before eliminating the deficit. Those making more than \$255,000 have saved over \$15,540 a year in taxes after the first round of tax cuts. Those earning less than \$15,150 saved \$160. Tax cuts have also cost us millions of dollars in debt and

interest payments.

We are called as Christians to love one another. Emergency assistance, like a food hamper, meets an immediate need but fails to honor a person's dignity. Nor does it give them the means to grow. That is why Christians and others worked hard to create public programs – medicare, affordable housing, and income supports – to help people in need without demeaning them.

The Ontario and federal governments have drastically cut back these programs, throwing thousands of Canadians upon the mercy of charitable organizations which cannot meet the need.

Combatting poverty will require renewed public efforts to safeguard the well-being of all. Repeating false stereotypes about the poor, questioning the existence of poverty when so many are hungry, and demanding tax cuts when many of our neighbors can barely keep a roof over their heads only makes the situation worse.

Greg deGroot-Maggetti
Socio-economic Concerns Co-ordinator
Citizens for Public Justice
Toronto

On the presence of the dove

I was delighted when I saw in the *Christian Courier* of June 26 a poem dedicated to me. Thank you very much, Harry der Nederlanden for this welcome surprise.

True, my children and my students used to make poems about me and for me at St. Nicholas, but these were of a different nature and never appeared in print. I had to become an octogenarian before a poem dedicated to me was printed.

When I read the poem, I thought it seems that there are in fact two doves, two Holy Spirits.

The Holy Spirit of inner and outer life

There is the Holy Spirit of the "inner" life and the other one of the "outer" life, the first one being more "individual," the other more "communal."

The poem sings about the dove with breast feathers "pure as grace," with wings "gathering benedictions" and "dark eyes with mild acceptance." When this dove descends on the heart, time stands still. There seems to be a moment of eternity.

It is quite different with the other dove. It crashes down into the messy rubble of a world at war, a world of scratching, strutting, pecking and contamination.

But when I "cluck" the dove for "bits of bread," there is a storm of feathers and I have to duck "the beat of battling wings" but, in doing so, I seem to miss "the holy things."

Well, poor observing soul, don't you get

any satisfaction from feeding the birds, from seeing their needs supplied, so that they are not hungry anymore? Perhaps some doves will stay and look at you "pure as grace," "burbling comfort" (as doves can). Then you may enjoy the "miracle of white on blue" forgetting for a little while the "contaminating" and "competing" "sparrows, grackles, gulls." (I love them too.)

My mystic Uncle Albert

What this means is that life is *not* of one piece. Looking back at my letter of May 29, I could say that life is more than my mystic Uncle Albert and more than my organizational father: life has both elements. So indeed, there are not two Holy Spirits, but there is just one — one who works in that "sacred space where we hear and respond to God in our inmost heart" (Carroll Guenn-Hart) and who also calls us to go out into the world with the message of the gospel of peace. The Holy Spirit is both. My Uncle Albert was also a hard worker, caring not only for his job, but also tending a large garden at night to feed his family. And my father had his moments when he sat still and was filled with wonder at the ways of the Lord; his eyes could fill with tears of thankfulness.

One of my good friends phoned me after he read my contribution of May 19, afraid that I had become too dogmatic, forgetting about the emotional side of life. "I hear enough sermons that feed me intellectually.

Continued on page 6...

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Opinion/Letter

Can Jubilee spark a resurgence of faith?

Despite John Hiemstra's upbeat tone about the state of religion in Canada ("Jubilee Sparks Resurgence of Faith," *Christian Courier*, June 12), I am not convinced.

It is ironic that the same issue of C.C. carried another article reporting that Canadians increasingly create their own concept of "spirituality," marked by indifference to the church and the Bible. "My private beliefs about Christianity are more important than what is taught by any church," as someone put it. There goes 2000 years of church history.

The Jubilee article, however, sounds a very different note. Several people are quoted who claim that there is a revitalization of Christian belief in Canada because of the impact of the so-called Jubilee campaign. We are told that people are reading Scripture again, and they are "eager to change and address systemic and structural injustice." Reinder Klein advises members of the Christian Reformed Church that they can learn a lot from the Jubilee Initiative. He states that the CRC "can learn that unless theology is theology-in-

action, it will remain a dead academic exercise."

In a similar vein Peter Vander Meulen says that a lot of CRC theology is ineffective because it is backward-looking, self-satisfied and fails to interact with other theologies. He believes that the CRC needs to develop a theology of action that is "Biblical and Reformed." He thinks that "Jubilee theology can help the church, give the church a new way to rethink some of our kingdom theology." And so on.

Theological liberalism'

This article not only dishes out strong criticism, but goes further in setting out a course of action that is more in line with theological liberalism than with biblical religion. I want to take the invitation to interact with other theologies seriously, and I took the trouble to read carefully two documents issued by the Canadian Ecumenical Jubilee Initiative, which purported to explain the biblical basis of the Jubilee campaign.

These documents overwhelmingly present the Christian faith

and the Bible in humanist fashion. The biblical revelation of God's holiness, human sinfulness, and atonement through Christ's suffering and death are ignored.

Roots of evil, injustice

Not humankind's alienation from God (which can only be overcome by God's reaching down to us) but unjust political and economic structures are seen as the root of evil and injustice. By the same token, injustice must therefore be overcome by structural, that is, political and economic transformation or revolution.

The problem with this view of Christianity is not its emphasis on the political and public implications of religion but its attempt to reduce the Christian faith to a program of social transformation. True faith indeed leads to action. But biblical religion is more than a program of social and political change. It lays bare the deepest cause of the human predicament, that is sin, which is rebellion against God. Above all, the Bible shows the way of escape from the ravages of sin.

Treatment of symptoms, not cure

Anything short of God's way of redemption amounts to the mere treatment of symptoms (invariably misdiagnosed) rather than a cure. If anything, the numerous failures of revolutions in our time should have taught us that lesson. In short, theological liberalism is just another version of human self-redemption. Biblical themes are taken out of their religious and historical context and are used as ideological ammunition for economic and political reform.

It is also telling that the rhetoric and suggested solutions offered by the promoters of the Jubilee Initiative borrow heavily from the political left. That's not surprising since the source of the problems are perceived to be structural and political. But in adopting that position, the church is in danger of becoming just another lobby group for certain politically correct causes.

I find it ironic that leaders in the Reformed community tell us that there is an upsurge of Christian faith

in Canada at a time when all around us we see plenty of signs to the contrary.

These are some of the reasons why I am sceptical about the glowing reports regarding an upsurge of interest in the Bible. Yes, it is true that we, members of the CRC, need to critically examine ourselves and be open to the needs of the world around us — and there is much work to be done on both counts. But we should do so in light of what the Bible teaches about sin, repentance and forgiveness. It is a serious error to exchange the treasures of biblical religion for a "gospel" that considers Jesus to be at best a great reformer but not the Son of God who came to take away the sins of the world.

Harry Antonides
Willowdale,
Ont.



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Penticton - CKOR	8:00 am	800	Oshawa - CKDO	8:00 am	1350
Port Alberni - CJAV	7:00 pm	1240	Owen Sound - CFOS	10:30 am	560
Prince George - CIRX	7:00 am	94.3	Pembroke - CHVR	10:00 am	96.7
Princeton - CHOR	8:00 am	1400	Sarnia - CHOK	7:30 am	1070
Smithers - CFBV	9:15 am	1230	Stratford - CJCS	8:30 am	1240
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THE BACK TO GOD HOUR

On the presence of the dove

... continued from page 5
but leave my heart cold," he complained. He likes to see Calvinists "burning with passion." And indeed, he himself is a man with a burning, priestly heart.

See, Harry, what I am saying you can also find in our Christian Reformed hymn book. Hymn 421 says:

"Spirit divine, come as the dove
and spread your wings,

the wings of peace and love"

But then Hymn 417 adds :

"Dwell in me, O blessed Spirit,
gracious teacher, friend divine!"

For the kingdom work that calls
me, O prepare this heart of mine."

Nuclear man'

The well-known priest Henri J.M. Nouwen wrote an article on the "nuclear man" in his beautiful booklet *The Wounded Healer*. According to him the nuclear man is the one "who has lost naive faith in the possibilities of technology, "the man who knows we can act not only to "create new life styles," but that we also "carry the potential for self-destruction." For the nuclear man (or woman) Nouwen sees two ways of escape from his predicament. There is "the mystical way" (the inner way) and there is "the revolutionary way" (only a total radical upheaval of the

existing order, together with a drastic change of direction, can prevent the end of everything.)

Many are caught in this dilemma: either this one or that, this dove or the other one, Uncle Albert's silence or my father's active participation. Uncle Albert might withdraw from a world at "the edge of the cliff" and my father might say "revolution is better than suicide."

At this point, however, Nouwen intervenes. There is yet another way. There is still what he calls "the Christian way." Nouwen says: "In Jesus the mystical and the revolutionary ways are not opposites, but two sides of the same human mode of experiential transcendence" (p.19). He concludes that in Jesus it has become "undeniably clear that changing the human heart and changing human society are not separate tasks, but are as interconnected as the two beams of the cross."

Harry der Nederlanden, let us think about this. In Christ we can be (and should be) revolutionary mystics and mystic revolutionaries.

Since there is only one dove, one Holy Spirit....

Rem Kooistra
Brampton, Ont.

Environment

Medieval replay

James Skillen

Can you guess which medieval pope or emperor made the following statements?

"Our earth-centred solar system, it must be stressed, is a reality — no matter how inconvenient that fact may be."

"To suggest that the solar system's earth-centredness is controversial among [scientists] is simply untrue and it misleads students ... It's only controversial as a political and religious issue among people who are committed to a different way of looking at the origins of life."

The truth is that these statements were not made by a medieval pope or emperor. I substituted words "earth-centred solar system" for the word "evolution" in *The Washington Post* editorial (8/16/99) and in a quotation from University of Oklahoma anthropologist Michael Nunley (*The Washington Post*, 12/1/99), respectively.

A double whammy

There is a double whammy in these statements, which treat theory as a fact and insist on the non-controversial character of what the author believes to be true.

Most of us were taught in school that the end of the so-called dark ages (the medieval period) came about when scientists and educators were liberated from papal and imperial requirements to publish and teach only the authorized truth.

Yet what we find today in American public education is that government's public-school monopoly opens the way for the scientific and educational majority to authorize the teaching of only what they consider to be "reality."

Evolution theory not a fact

The fact is, however, that grand evolutionary theory is not a fact. *The Washington Post* editors who said that evolution "is a reality — no matter how inconvenient that fact may be," wrote a few lines later that sensitivity in the classroom to those with a religious conscience "should not mean legitimizing fictitious doubts about scientifically accepted theories" [emphasis added].

Clearly what they mean by the "fact" and "reality" of evolution is that they have put their confidence in the scientists who hold to evolutionary theory.

What about the non-controversial character of evolutionary theory? In a recent review of two books by Peter Singer, the controversial Princeton professor who repudiates the "sanctity of

human life," Peter Berkowitz takes Singer to task for advocating a very controversial view of evolution held by sociobiologists (*The New Republic*, 1/10/00).

Accidental creationist

In another article, Robert Wright blasts the famous biologist Stephen Jay Gould for his view of evolution, which might make someone "wonder how evolution could have created anything as intricate as a human being" ("The Accidental Creationist," *The New Yorker*, 12/13/99). These two articles alone, not to mention countless books and journal articles, demonstrate that a great deal of controversy surrounds the theory of evolution.

There are at least two important questions, therefore, that need to be addressed by public officials in their capacity as lawmakers and enforcers. The first is whether government today has any more right to "authorize" scientific truth than it did in the days when popes and emperors were the government.

No evolution in Kansas

What makes this question especially relevant today is that the recent upsurge in concern about the teaching of evolution arose because a majority (6-4) of the Kansas school board voted to no longer require knowledge of grand evolutionary theory in certain examinations. If democratic freedom is better than papal or imperial authoritarianism, why should scientists be upset by the exercise of democracy? The reason for their upset, of course, is that the scientific elite believe that they should be the ones to authorize the scientific truth that ought to be taught to all students.

Government shouldn't impose truth on society

What the latest controversy demonstrates, however, is that government, whether authoritarian or democratic, should not be the one to impose scientific, philosophical, or theological truth on society. Neither pope nor scientists should be able to use the power of government to compel curricular content.

If government should not be allowed to enforce doctrines, including scientific theories, then the second important political question is this: how should government support and encourage both science and education? The answer is that government should orient its support of education by respecting academic and scientific freedom,

Cats and cows — object lessons in patience and humility

Creation waits...
John Wood



We have a cat; or rather I should say that a cat has us. You never really own a cat. They just seem to live with you. Some cats put up with our foolishness with a great deal of patience. The cat at our house is surly and barely tolerates us. But for about five minutes each day he turns his loving attention to us, leaping up on the first available lap. A little rub on the ears and under the chin and it is over. Then he either leaps down or signals the end with a light nip. If you fail to take the hint he makes the point more emphatically.

A pooch and pet fish too

Having a cat in the house is not that remarkable. But having a cow at home would be, as Dorothy in Oz said, "a horse of a different color". No, we don't have a pet cow at our house. But we do have a dog and some goldfish. And on occasion I bring home various insects, mostly crickets, for a brief stay. The dog wonderfully understands us. He is always quick to come to attention around whatever activity is at hand and he accepts us unconditionally. We are the only pack he has ever known and he loves us all. We may do some confusing things from time to time, but we always bring home food, supply water, give walks and offer great tug-of-wars. What else could a dog want?

The goldfish on the other hand are simply there. They live in a world so distant from us that there is little emotional attachment. They are however, very soothing. The fluid motion and flashes of color help us to relax. But psychological studies have shown that it isn't the fish, so much as the movement that does the trick. A view-screen with colored lights works about as well, with the added benefit that you don't need to feed it. And as for the crickets, they are the objects of the cat's great delight. He knows the cage they come in and races upstairs from his sleeping quarters to lay siege to the cage, listening and watching in hopes that one will "come out to play".

What the cat has done in our house, more than

any creature is to put us in touch with the "other" of creation. Here in the city I spend most of my life out of touch with animals. In this urban world dominated by concrete, steel and electronic images it is easy to forget the reality of nature. The cat leaps up and commands my attention. What I do with it says more about me, and what I think of God's world, than I ever thought possible. Here is a creature with many features that I do not favor. I have been clawed enough times to consider a de-clawing operation or occasionally other even more drastic solutions. Yet the more time I spend with the cat, learning its needs and moods, the less likely I am to experience those claws.

A lesson learned

So, I have learned something of humility and patience from our cat. But I suspect that the most important lesson is that God has a fondness for cats. And his relationship to them has little to do with me. I am welcome to enjoy them, and, after a fashion, to have dominion over them. But in the end they remain his cats. I cannot own them and they do not answer to me. It is this dose of humility that I think we need today. In a world of technological triumphs it is easy to become over-impressed with our own achievements. This feline reminds me that we are still only playing in the sandbox. Despite our enthusiasm for taking things apart and putting them together in new ways, we still are only scratching the surface of understanding this amazing creation. Oh, and what of cows? Well, any herdsman can tell you lessons from these patient beasts. And maybe I will too, but cats are enough for now.



John R. Wood teaches environmental science at The King's University College, Edmonton.

just as it finally agreed to respect ecclesiastical and theological freedom.

Scientists, just as theologians, should be free to continue to argue with one another about the truth of different convictions and different theories. And educators should be free to contend with one another about what is true, false, and hypothetical in the natural sciences, the social sciences, and the humanities.

Relinquish educational monopoly

The only way that this can happen is for government to relinquish what remains of its educational monopoly. Neither creationists nor evolutionists should be allowed to use government power to impose their views on everyone. Government should not have the last word on

textbooks or on any theory of origins.

Governments at all levels should grant equal support (legally and financially) to the variety of schools and school systems chosen by parents and offered by educators. Different views of science, philosophy, and life will

undoubtedly be propagated in those different school systems. That is as it should be.

James Skillen is executive director of the Center for Public Justice and editor of the Public Justice Report, from which this article was taken.

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Church

'We resist idolatry of capital and new religion of consumerism'

HOFGEISMAR, Germany (ENI) — Christians from many denominations have appealed for alternatives to "globalised capitalism". These alternatives should strengthen democratic participation and ensure survival of the poor and marginalised. They also urged churches to support a "global coalition for economic justice and faith" and to resist the "fundamentalist religious adherence to neo-liberalism".

"The ideology of the free market captures and dominates all sectors of societies and all dimensions of people's lives, even our bodies and deepest desires," said a concluding declaration from "Colloquium 2000", an ecumenical meeting in Germany. "The time has come for a radical change in the dominant economic system. The time has come for a committed process of committed recognition, education and confession regarding economic injustice and ecological destruction."



Lebanese citizens in an area of Beirut damaged by its civil war.

Lebanese Christians want Syrian troops out

BEIRUT, Lebanon (EP) — Lebanese Christians are openly calling for the withdrawal of Syrian troops from Lebanon and the reduction of Syrian influence on the Lebanese culture and economy. Syria has had a military presence within the country since the Lebanese civil war 25 years ago. Since the withdrawal of Israeli troops from southern Lebanon in May, Maronite Christians have called for the removal of 35,000 Syrian troops presently stationed in Lebanon. Lebanese politicians and officials from the UN have also called for the end of the Syrian presence in Lebanon, however there is no evidence that the Lebanese government will ask Syria to leave its borders. Maronites make up more than 10 percent of Lebanon's population.

Third Nigerian state adopts sharia

ABUJA, Nigeria (EP) — A third Nigerian state has announced it will establish the Islamic law of conduct, *sharia*, into its legal system. The state government of Kano announced June 21 that *sharia* will be enforced starting Nov 26. After the announcement, Muslims of Kano reportedly showed their support of the decision with celebrations in the streets. Otherwise, reaction to the announcement was relatively peaceful. The Christian population of Kano, about equal to that of the Muslim population, reportedly stayed away from the celebrations. A similar announcement earlier this year in the Nigerian state of Kaduna led to riots between Muslims and Christians and hundreds of deaths. The riots were allegedly started when Christian protesters, demonstrating against the establishment of *sharia*, clashed with Muslim groups.

Presbyterian Assembly (USA) seeks amendment prohibiting gay marriages

LONG BEACH, Calif. — The 212th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (USA) dealt with some potentially divisive issues, such as same-sex marriages, gay ordination, and overtures that asked the assembly to declare that an "irreconcilable impasse" had developed in the denomination. The PCUSA Assembly represents about 2.6 million members in 11,400 congregations. About 3,500 people participated in the assembly, 520 as voting representatives. The Assembly, meeting in Long Beach, California, began in the third week of June with committee meetings and ran into the first days of July.

Slim majority

The Assembly voted by a slim margin — 51 percent — to send a proposed constitutional amendment prohibiting same-sex marriages to its presbyteries for ratification. Two previous attempts to pass such an amendment during the past decade have failed, but the denomination seems to be moving toward a more conservative position.

The amendment reads: "Scripture and our Confessions teach that God's intention for all people is to live either in fidelity within the covenant of marriage between a man and a woman or in chastity in singleness. Church property shall not be used for, and church officers shall not take part in conducting any ceremony or event that pronounces blessing or gives approval of the church or invokes the blessing of God upon any relationship that is inconsistent with God's intention as expressed in the preceding sentence."

Elizabeth O'Brien, a Youth Advisory Delegate from the Presbytery of the Peaks, said the church "has a responsibility to provide a clear standard to upcoming generations. If we bless what the Bible calls sin, what kind of standard are we setting? We cannot deny the word of the Lord."

In the debate, strong opinions were voiced on both sides of the issue.

"It seems clear that the agenda of gay and lesbian sympathizers is to convince the mainline churches that homosexuality is an inborn condition and thus is okay," argued the Rev. Laura Grace Eisenhower, a retired minister from Grand Canyon Presbytery. "Honest research finds no claim that homosexuality is genetic," she said in support of the overtures.

Cleveland Evans, a college professor from Bellevue, Neb., countered that his research shows that successful same-sex relationships are marked by the same characteristics of love and commitment as heterosexual relationships.

'Counterfeit' unions

Jack Sharp of Carlisle Presbytery called same-sex unions "counterfeits." God created marriage, he said, "and we cannot bless what God has not blessed."

Rob Gentry, an elder from Anderson, S.C., said the issue is fear. "Fear is the opposite of faith and love and has spawned wars and inquisitions," he said. "I ask you to examine your fears and choose faith — homosexuals are beloved children of God."

But blessing same-sex unions denies the transforming power of the gospel, said the Rev. Tim Fearon of Santa Barbara Presbytery. "Change and transformation is the heart of Christianity," he said, "and to bless a same-sex union is to say to homosexuals, 'There is no hope for you to change or be transformed.'"

The Presbyterian Assembly also rejected by a vote of 453-71 an overture that would have declared an irreconcilable impasse to exist in the denomination.

The Rev. Richard Leon from the Presbytery of Seattle and moderator of the Committee on Theological Issues that brought the recommendation, said in making his presentation, "We do not give up on God or the church by calling it an irreconcilable impasse. I think some of us were thinking that there is the irresistible force of the Gospel of Jesus Christ that is the gift of unity to us and we believe that it's worth our effort to continue to dialogue theologically. The more we dialogue theologically, even with our differences, the stronger we believe that we will be."

Rev. Jack Patrick from the Presbytery which had sent the overture to the Assembly said, "I believe that there is a great theological divide in our denomination, and we as a church are not dealing with this theological divide." Pointing to one issue, homosexuality, he said, "We can no longer ignore the central issues of theology in our church. We need to bring these theological issues to the forefront so that we can declare what we really believe as Presbyterians. Diversity can only go so far before

we no longer can be called a confessing church of Jesus Christ."

The Assembly approved the formation of a task force "to study the doctrine of the Trinity in Presbyterian theology and worship, with particular attention to the need to recover the terms and images that refer to the being of the persons of the Trinity...."

The Rev. Charles Wiley, Associate for Theology in the Office of Worship, told the General Assembly News, "The focus of the study is on the Trinity in Presbyterian worship, theology and life, which will include but not focus on Trinitarian language." He said, "There is no intention to replace the Trinitarian formula [Father, Son and Holy Spirit], but to enrich our ways of understanding God."

The Assembly rejected by a vote of 330-189 an overture which called for a new study on abortion from a strictly Biblical point of view that would "avoid any attention to the social policy witness or secular precedence."

Committee Moderator Leon said the committee felt that the 1992 policy had been done in a balanced way and that a new study was not needed.

Earlier in the week members had an opportunity to hear an address written by Thomas F. Torrance which argued that the human embryo is already genetically complete from the moment of conception, a fact that can be explained only by "a controlling source of information [that] bears upon the human nature and life of the developing embryo from the beginning."

Because Jesus was made one of us and one with us, Torrance maintained, the virgin birth of Jesus is an essential part of the gospel of salvation. It is this understanding that led the theologians of the early church to trace "the root of redemption not only to the death and resurrection of Christ, but to his very conception and birth." Because of the virgin birth, the fetus is sanctified by Jesus as an embryonic person.

Torrance's paper concluded with a reflection on Jesus weeping for Jerusalem and likening abortion, particularly in Christian countries, to a holocaust. "Can we not allow the tears that continue to flow from the compassionate pleading eyes of the Lord Jesus, the Redeemer's tears, [to] quench the flames of holocaust?"

JULY 24, 2000

Church

The Bible League partners in outreach to Hungary

SZEGED, Hungary — The Bible League will partner with Operation Mobilization this summer in an evangelical outreach to southern Hungary. "Love Szeged" will use elements of sports, mime, drama, and music to present the young people of Southern Hungary with the saving message of Jesus Christ. The project will take place over two weeks in July.

The Bible League will begin training 100 Christian young people from six different denominations in follow up for this outreach in June. Following up decisions for Christ can often be a difficult part of such a major outreach plan.

Equipping young people

"Operation Mobilization does an excellent job equipping young people for focused outreach campaigns," said Rev. Robert Martin, The Bible League's director of Central and Eastern Europe Ministry. "But they need to depend on the local church for the follow up of seekers and new believers. This has been difficult in Hungary, as most churches are not equipped for the task."

The Bible League will train believers in the "Project Philip" program. Project Philip is a program of evangelism and discipleship whereby participants work with local Christians to complete a series of Bible studies. As the students complete the studies, they earn a New Testament, and after additional studies, a whole Bible. Throughout the studies they work one-on-one with a believer to strengthen his faith, and ultimately help him to become involved in a local church.

Operation Mobilization's



A village in Hungary's fertile farmland.

C.M. DIXON FROM CARL OSTMAN

Hungary Field Leader, Terry Linggenhoel said, "I believe the Project Philip material will make this outreach successful and allow our ministry to be more fruitful." The newly-elected President of the Baptist Union of Hungary, Meszaros Kalman, has also expressed his appreciation for The Bible League's help in this effort.

Few professing Christians

"Love Szeged" will be the first major ministry to this area in recent history. "The Budapest area has seen several evangelistic outreaches in recent years," says The Bible League's Country Coordinator in Hungary, Andrea Muszka, "but the outlying areas have not been targeted." This outreach will focus on the southern city of Szeged and its surrounding

towns and villages, and it will include northern Serbia. While many in this area have some traditional connection with a religion, few profess a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

The Bible League is a worldwide Scripture placement ministry, committed to bringing people to Christ through a knowledge of his Word. In 1999, The Bible League provided over 21 million Scriptures worldwide and gathered 13 million people in small group Bible studies; Bible League-trained believers established over 2,560 churches in 1999.

From a press release by The Bible League, 16801 Van Dam Road, South Holland, Illinois 60473.

RCA becomes Christian Reformed Churches of Australia

LAUNCESTON, Australia — At their triennial synod, the Reformed Churches of Australia decided to rename themselves, and became the Christian Reformed Churches of Australia (CRCA).

Women deacons possible

Women may now be chosen as deacons in the CRCA. However, the governing structures of the church were changed at the same time. The governing body of the local church, the session, will now include only elders and ministers.

Although the church will ordain and install women as deacons, the restructuring of the session, the church believes, will reserve the ruling functions in the church for men. This accords with the principle, the report said, that women not have authority over men in the church.

For 15 years the CRCA has been studying whether children may partake of the Lord's Supper. This year a report came to synod urging the adoption of this practice, although the report

offered arguments for and against the practice. If adopted, the committee also suggested the church have three categories of membership: baptized, communicant and professing.

The synod, however, stayed with a more traditional view. It allowed that children as young as ten years of age could make profession of faith. With such young children they should offer the profession "to the best of [their] understanding."

Christian rescuers in Philippines also become hostages

MANILA, Philippines (EP) — Christians who visited the headquarters of a Muslim extremist group to plead for the release of hostages became hostages themselves July 2. The Christians brought gifts of rice as well as money and literature to the stronghold of the Abu Sayyaf group, a group of militant rebels who want an independent Muslim state established in the Philippine archipelago.

The Sayyaf group kidnapped an international group of tourists from a Malaysian resort on April 23 and has held them for ransom at \$1 million each. The Christians were let inside the stronghold, but were not released. Rebels inside reportedly took the evangelistic literature given to them and let the Christians sing and pray inside the compound. However, the group is reportedly being held against their will. The government of the Philippines is in negotiations for the safe release of all the hostages.

Lutherans tell G8 leaders to keep promises to cut debts of poor nations

TURKU, Finland (ENI) — As the world's leading industrialised countries prepare for a major meeting next month, the council of the Lutheran World Federation has called for "genuine implementation" of commitments to reduce the debt of the world's poorest countries.

In a joint message at the conclusion of an eight-day meeting in the Finnish city of Turku, the LWF council called for the "liberation of the heavily indebted developing countries of the world from the tyranny of unsustainable debt". Leaders of the G8 countries (the seven leading industrialised countries plus Russia) are to meet late next month in the Japanese city of Okinawa.

Evangelist preaches in war-torn Congo

BUKAVU, Congo (EP) — Despite threats of bombings, stonings and beatings by rebel forces, thousands of people assembled in the Bukavu stadium to hear American evangelist Sammy Tippit speak June 21-25. A war-torn nation since a military coup overthrew the former government almost two years ago, the Congo has had little recent evangelistic activity because of the inherent danger. Almost 2 million people have died in eastern Congo as a result of the 22-month civil war.

Tippit was invited by Congolese Christians who heard him preach a message of peace and reconciliation to Rwanda in 1995. While more than 150 churches representing 20 denominations supported and participated in the crusade, Tippit's arrival faced extreme persecution from Congolese rebels.

"Rebel forces opposed to evangelical Christians tore down the posters for the crusade," Tippit reported. "They made frightening threats via underground radio broadcasts against anyone thinking of attending the crusade. And then, on top of everything, the mixer on our sound system blew the opening day of the crusade. But God moved in spite of it all. The devil roared, but he was defeated. God won the battle, and the people of Bukavu are rejoicing with exceeding gladness. Many were ushered into God's kingdom." Reportedly, 3,500 people came forward during the crusade to accept Christ.

To put it shortly, the Church forgets that Christianity is not an attitude of mind, but a type of life: a man's spirit is not known by his opinion, but by his action and general conduct.

— William Temple

News/Psychology

Manners matter

Sonya VanderVeen Feddema

I sang as I walked down the road. A boy biked past, then doubled back. "What a dumb song!" he sneered, then cycled off.

His comment startled me, stopped my song, and momentarily stole my joy.

rubble, good manners build bridges between people and promote well-being. How?

Respectful manners can slowly spiritually and emotionally mend broken relationships. Where awkwardness exists between people because of disagreements, gracious manners will probably not solve the problem. However, when opponents treat each other courteously, further harm can be avoided and healing fostered. As a friend observed about a community confrontation, "Years from now people will forget the reasons for the conflict, but they will not so easily forget how they were treated by others."

Manners are magnetic

Courteous manners are magnetic. Polite people draw others to themselves. They create pleasant places where cordiality and considerateness can be counted on. Their behaviour makes others feel emotionally safe and able to function well in their presence.

Positive manners curb moodiness. "Christians can't afford to be moody," a friend told me. Though we all experience moodiness, we should not make it an excuse for behaviour. Good manners give us tools for treating others in God-honoring ways, whatever mood we're in. As we exercise good manners despite our moodiness, our spirits lift and we experience joy.

Going beyond please and thank you

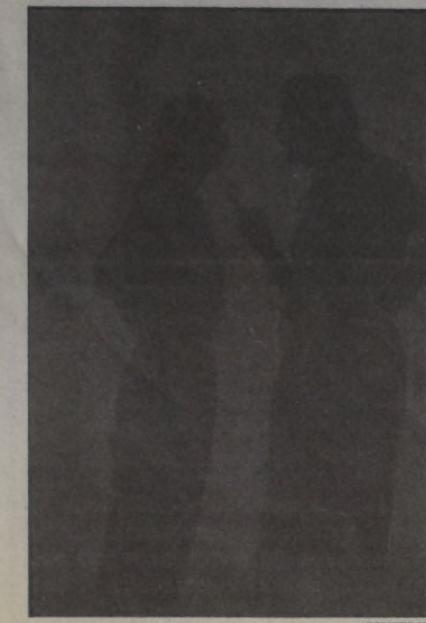
Good manners go beyond saying please and thank you, although that's an important place to start. Here are some other basic courtesies for Christians to practise.

Greet people by name if you know them personally. You thus affirm their uniqueness and value, adding a personal touch in an increasingly impersonal society. You're saying, "You are known. You are part of a community."

Don't show favoritism. In Christ there is no rich or poor. There is no one unworthy of our respect. Philippians 2:3-4, Galatians 3:28, and James 2:1-9 call us to be mannerly to everyone, no matter what their race, age, gender, or social status.

Be culturally sensitive.

Be culturally sensitive. As communities become more ethnically diverse, we need to be aware of



COMSTOCK

Rudeness robs us of happiness, laughter, self-esteem, and peace.

Rudeness does that. It robs us of happiness, laughter, self-esteem, and peace. Rude people leave emotional wreckage in the wake of their words and actions. Like earthquakes and bombs reduce buildings to rubble, consistently rude behaviour causes sadness, bitterness, anger, depression, and cynicism. The very word *rude* is akin to the Latin word *rudus*, which means debris or rubble.

Culture encourages rudeness

North American culture encourages rudeness. The underlying message of television, music, popular magazines, and advertising declares, "You have the right to say what you want when you want to. You have the right to treat others as you choose, regardless of their well-being. Manners do not matter."

Yet manners do matter, because they are a matter of the heart.

In his famous chapter on love, the apostle Paul states a directive for practising good manners: "Love is not rude." If love is not rude, it logically follows that love treats others with respect and courtesy.

Instead of producing emotional

what different cultures define as courtesy. For example, the mother of my son's new Korean classmate taught me that when a woman in Korea visits a female friend, she ends the visit as soon as the friend's husband returns home. When my husband knew my Korean friend was visiting me, he phoned to see if she was still here or planning to stay awhile. If so, he came home later. In this way he made her feel welcome in our home.

Show interest in people's lives. Ask about pleasant and unpleasant circumstances. Has a baby been born in the family? Has a child graduated? Has a family member

or friend died? Is someone ill?

Avoid superficial manners which ignore people's pain. If you ask "How are you?" mean what you say and be willing to wait for an answer. But know and respect the boundary between polite interest and nosiness.

Treat rude people respectfully. Several years ago my friend and I hosted a neighbourhood open house. Personally. We invited each family personally. One old man who answered my knock bared his teeth and sneered. "I don't think so!" I said goodbye with a smile, even though his rudeness reduced me to debris on his doorstep. I struggled to see him as Christ

would see him: one of God's creatures in need of love, an emotional grape shrivelled into a raisin. Though I didn't know his history, I reminded myself that people act certain ways for various reasons. I chose to pour my pleasant manners on him like a healing ointment that might change his life.

Manners lubricate relationships. Just as a machine runs well when its parts are properly greased, communities thrive when they are oiled with polite manners. However, for Christians there is much more at stake than a smooth-running society.

What is at stake is our Christian witness to the world!

Upsetting the world

You may wonder why anyone would leave the beauty of Ontario in June for the sweltering heat of Orlando, Florida. But that's exactly what my husband Jack, our daughter Stephanie, and I did a few weeks ago. The drawing card was a three day conference sponsored by Ligonier Ministries. Jack has read numerous books by Ligonier's founder, R.C. Sproul. Furthermore, the conference's title, "Upsetting the World," held an almost magnetic attraction for Jack. Back in January he simply announced he was going, and "anyone else" in the family was welcome to join him.

Stephanie and I immediately accepted his gracious invitation. Our other two children, Jessica (14) and James (19), decided they would rather stay at home. Their plans included several wild parties, pizza every night, and the wanton consumption of Coke in the livingroom, without coasters. I ignored their threats and began plans for this rather unusual vacation.

Jack and I haven't flown anywhere since our honeymoon in 1978, unless you count ten minutes in a helicopter over the International Plowing Match. I wondered if I could possibly keep all the little details straight, not to mention all the little pieces of paper. Visions of losing the \$20 Park & Fly discount coupon, the customs declaration, &/or our boarding passes haunted me. With obsessive/compulsive determination I checked and re-checked the location of my birth certificate, credit card and plane tickets. Much to my relief our arrival at Orlando was uneventful.

Orlando: 'To stand in line'

I learned in grade school that Florida was so named by Spanish explorer Ponce de Leon because it is a "flowery" place. I wonder if Orlando derives its name from some Spanish verb meaning "to stand in line," since this is apparently prerequisite to almost every activity a visitor is likely to engage in. But really, Orlando in June is lovely. The lawns and gardens were lush, and the warm temperatures were a welcome change to us, since Ontario this year has been rather cool and wet.

I think Americans like things big, judging by the Kennedy Space Center, Disney World and the average breakfast buffet. (All of which you must stand in line for.) The Orange County Convention

Intangible Things

Heidi VanDerSlikke

Center, where our conference took place, is approximately the size of Prince Edward Island. Okay, that may be an exaggeration, but as we arrived it was the site of a convention of 15,000 Southern Baptists.

Blatant American Christianity

I also noticed that Americans appear far more blatant about their Christianity than we Canadians. Cars are liberally decorated with biblical bumper stickers and Christian fishes. All kinds of people sport T-shirts with Christian logos and slogans, and Christian radio stations abound. One morning our waiter, Willy, stood in the middle of a busy restaurant and loudly gave his opinion on issues being addressed by the Southern Baptist Convention. I have a feeling in Canada Willy might have found himself unemployed.

The conference for which we had come started on Thursday that week. Roughly 4,500 people came from 48 states and four countries to learn from top-notch speakers. I eagerly took pages and pages of notes while listening to a parade of theological heavyweights. We were continually challenged to "take the 'jelly' out of evangelical." Then came Joni Eareckson Tada. I have less than one page of notes from her lecture, the lines of which are blurred by the teardrops that fell on them. Her words took hold without being written down.

Finally we left behind the palm trees and returned to the land of pine trees. As we pulled into the lane, a sign on the lawn greeted us, "LOST CHILDREN SEEKING PARENTS (AND MAYBE SISTER). APPLY WITHIN." Back to reality. At least there were no pop can stains on the coffee table.



Heidi Van Der Slikke raises teenagers in Harrison, Ont.

Television & Movies/News

Behind the camera is now on camera**Ron DeBoer**

Have you noticed how television loves to turn the camera on itself? More and more, television doesn't give us compelling storylines about the human condition or valuable information about the world in which we live.

Instead, television tells us how television works. It shows us the world behind the cameras; it deconstructs the very medium where we go to be entertained or informed.

Illusion of TV now the subject

The old days of television worked very hard at hiding the way programming was done. For instance, a camera- or crew-person would never be spoken to on the air, even the audience would not be shown for fear of revealing cables, floor directors and cameras. As television has matured and the second and third generation of television-watchers has come of age, the illusion of television — so long protected — has become the subject itself.

Now David Letterman makes fun of the way something is written on a cue card: situation comedy characters refer to other television



Now David Letterman makes fun of the way something is written on a cue card.

shows; even television shows themselves — like the Simpsons — make fun of issues like cartoon violence or celebrity disillusionment.

But television's obsession with itself has become even more overt. Recently, I've seen behind-the-scenes at "Monday Night Football," behind-the-scenes at the "World Wrestling Federation," and we've also been treated to a behind-the-scenes look at "Who Wants to be a Millionaire." On CNN the other night, guest-host Kathy Lee Gifford, who was sitting in for the absent Larry King, spent the hour interviewing fellow interviewers Diane Sawyer from

20/20 and Joan Rivers from the entertainment program E! The three of them shared stories of their best interviews, swapped ethical conundrums about what they should ask political figures, and served up strategies to score celebrity interviews when said celebrity isn't selling a new movie or CD.

And speaking of entertainment programs — Entertainment Tonight, Inside Edition and E! keep us abreast on contract negotiations, public appearances, and the latest weight-gain of TV stars. We'll lump all these shows together and call them Gossip Television. Do we really need to know anything about these actors other than the parts they play in stories we watch to entertain or educate ourselves? I watch ER for its drama and ethical conundrums; I'm entertained and learn how to solve problems. Do I need to know how much money Noah Wyle (Dr. Carter) earns as an actor per episode or who accompanied him to the Emmy Awards? Indeed, do I need to know his real name?

Then there are all those bloopers. For some reason we love to break down the illusion of television and look into the cracks that appear in our favorite

characters as they mess up their lines. We want to see the actor behind the character. On a deeper level, exposé shows like Biography and some of the news-magazine shows like 60 Minutes or 20/20 present stories about the goings-on during runs of hit shows like All in the Family or Hogan's Heroes. Now we know Bob Crane, the POW star of Hogan's Heroes, led a dark life outside the set of the hit show which eventually led to his murder.

Miserable Mr. Brady

And we now know Robert Reed — Mr. Brady from the Brady Bunch — was miserable to work with even though he is one of America's best loved TV fathers, thanks to a recent TV movie, *Growing Up Brady*. So now we have a movie whose actors portray the actors of a 70s situation comedy both in front of the camera and behind during the Brady Bunch years. What's next? A movie about the behind-the-scenes workings of a movie about a hit TV show? The potential is infinite. And as long as television keeps the

camera on itself, the medium will never run out of material.

The problem with television covering television is that "behind the scenes" has become as constructed as what we think of as "real TV." The programs showing us the goings-on behind the camera are slickly packaged and carefully edited. When everyone associated with a program is aware a behind-the-scenes exposé is being done and indeed participate in the show's construction, how closer to the truth are we about anything?

The bigger question, perhaps, is why we, the audience, are so fascinated by every aspect of the "making" of television? Why do we take more interest in TV characters' (and their real identities) lives than in the lives of members of our own extended families? Why are our thoughts and conversations dominated by people we've never met and will never meet? Perhaps all of us need to take stock of how we worship television and television personalities.

ABC launches 'Search for Jesus' but looks in all the wrong places

NEW YORK, N.Y. (EP) — ABC news anchor Peter Jennings is looking for Jesus. Jennings hosted a controversial two-hour documentary, "The Search for Jesus," which aired on the network in June. The program drew sharp criticism for its reliance on liberal sources from the fringes of biblical scholarship.

The *Washington Post* dismissed the "flawed and muddled" program as "a gratuitous effort to cast doubt on deeply and widely held beliefs," and said it was full of "specious debunkery."

James Merritt, president of the Southern Baptist Convention, noted that the program included only one self-described evangelical, but featured several members of the controversial Jesus Seminar, a group devoted to portraying the Bible as myth.

Ted Baehr, a Christian media analyst, said people watching the program would not realize that the Jesus Seminar has been "thoroughly refuted theologically," and warned that the program "could lead many people astray."



Jennings has little to say about his own search for Jesus. In an interview with the religion website belief.net, Jennings acknowledged that he went through a period of seeking regarding his relationship to God, and has spent time studying the Bible and meeting "with men who have tried to understand that about their own lives." But Jennings added, "I don't want to talk about my faith in spirituality at all."

People who are searching for Jesus will have more luck finding Him if they watch the JESUS video, produced by Campus

Crusade for Christ. The ministry distributed the 10 millionth copy of the video in late June.

"Spiritually-based television specials like Peter Jennings' 'The Search For Jesus,' the recent CBS miniseries about

Jesus, and other made-for-TV programs targeting mass audiences validate the nation's growing hunger for spiritual truths," said Kevin Mascaro, Director of JESUS Video Project. "The JESUS video provides a factual, detailed and historical portrayal of the life of Christ, offering viewers a unique format for getting honest answers to their spiritual curiosity."

More than 3 billion people in 233 nations have seen the JESUS video, which is available in 600 languages (with more than 200 more translations in production).

Award "Tarrs" editor of Christianweek

GUELPH, Ontario (Faith Today) Doug Koop, editor of *Christianweek*, has won the Leslie K. Tarr Award for 2000. The Tarr award celebrates a major career contribution to Christian writing in Canada. *Faith Today* magazine presents the award annually at its June writers conference.

"Doug Koop, through his editorials in *Christianweek* and through his correspondence with would-be writers, has boosted religious journalism in Canada, and continues to help it develop. He has shepherded many writers to reach a national audience with their writing for the first time," said Bill Fledderus, a member of the Tarr selection committee in Toronto. Fledderus is news and features editor at *Faith Today*.

Koop, based in Winnipeg, has edited *Christianweek* since 1996, when he took over from editor Harold Jantz, who founded the paper in 1986. *Christianweek* is a bi-weekly, trans-denominational, national, broadsheet newspaper.

The award is named for Les Tarr (d. 1995), who was given the first award in 1988. Tarr wrote for *The Toronto Star* and was one of the first editors of *Faith Today*. Other distinguished recipients have included John Redekop,



Doug Koop

Maxine Hancock, Margaret Clarkson, Harold Jantz, Phyllis Mitchell, John White, Harold Fuller, Hugh Cook, Jim Taylor and Audrey Dorsch. The award is mandated to be given "to a writer who has been significant in communicating Christian truth and developing a high standard of writing among Christians."

Faith Today and its publisher, the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada, presented the award at God Uses Ink 2000, in Guelph, Ont., June 16. Nominations for next year's winner, to be announced June 15, 2001, are now welcome.

Television & Movies

Gladiator: Maximum virtue

Harry der Nederlanden

There was a time, not so many generations ago, when every school child and certainly every university student would have been familiar with the legends and stories about the growth of Rome into an empire and the struggles among the different factions within the city of Rome for control of this vast empire.

The name of Marcus Aurelius was as familiar as that of Martin Luther King to today's school children, for many of the moral and political lessons of history were drawn from classical times. Although few movie makers or novelists in recent times have set their stories in this era, it still retains an aura of the elemental and the monumental, of a time when the fundamental patterns of our civilization were laid.

The aura of an era

Although it does not strive for historical accuracy, *Gladiator* manages to capitalize on the aura that surrounds this period. Many reviewers referred to the epic scope and the rich themes that the movie evokes at the beginning. Although impressed by the film's quality, the reviewers also expressed some disappointment that it did not deliver on these expectations. Soon, they complained, it devolves into just another revenge story.

A few minutes into the film, we see the main character Maximus' wife and son butchered by the new emperor, Commodus, the son of Marcus Aurelius, and the big themes of empire and democracy, freedom and justice take back seat to the revenge plot, and a bloody plot it is too.

Bloody ruthlessness and ambition

The bloody ruthlessness and ambition of some of the Roman emperors is a matter of legend, and our knowledge of how this

What's the difference between the contemporary moviegoer and the spectators roaring for violence and blood in the coliseum?

noble man, Maximus, has been victimized by such evil only deepens our identification with him. The film boils down to a struggle between the mighty, evil emperor and an upright man he thought he could brush aside like a fly. So the film portrays a struggle between good and evil and provides a hero of impressive proportions.

Doesn't this mean that Maximus qualifies for inclusion in William Bennett's *Book of Virtues*? Maximus is a man who clearly models certain virtues and he fearlessly opposes a tyrant who is corrupting an entire civilization. The values are clear. What more could we ask for?

What makes some of our more thoughtful film critics withhold wholehearted praise? It's the personal element. What arouses Maximus from his lethargy



Maximus seeks revenge in the Coliseum of Rome

and turns him into Rome's star gladiator is his passion for revenge: he wants to kill the man who killed his wife and son. Of course, by so doing, he will also rid Rome of someone who is deliberately corrupting the common people with sensational spectacles, who is threatening to exterminate the wise leaders in the senate, and who is about to force his own sister to be his concubine. This adds intensity and urgency to the quest for revenge, so we cheer Maximus on in his bloody course.

As Maximus and his fellow gladiators fight for survival in the great Coliseum of Rome, there's a point when we, as viewers, take ringside seats. On the other side of the screen there's the bloodthirsty Roman mob which has been corrupted by their emperor, so they delight in these horrific spectacles that sacrifice human beings for entertainment. And on this side of the screen there's us. Doesn't watching a sensational, bloody film like this corrupt us just as much as the gladiatorial slaughters corrupted the Roman masses?

Parallels with entertainment industry

It is, I think, a question the film poses deliberately. The man who bought Maximus and turned him into a slave says on a couple of occasions that he's simply an entertainer, so we are invited to draw parallels with the contemporary entertainment industry. What's the difference between the contemporary moviegoer and the spectators roaring for violence and blood in the Coliseum? This moral equation is, of course, hardly new; but Maximus poses it

with added force and depth.

The virtues and skills that Maximus displays in the coliseum are the same ones that made him a great general on the frontier. A connection is made between the violence exerted by Marcus Aurelius in the name of the Roman ideal of imperium and the violent contests staged by his evil son. Near the beginning of the film we see Aurelius rejecting his natural son because he doesn't possess the necessary virtues and lusts for power; he offers instead to adopt Maximus as his "spiritual" son because he embodies all the ancient virtues of Rome – honor, courage, loyalty, honesty. When the two "sons" come head to head, there is no doubt whatsoever, who we are cheering for: we join those in the Coliseum chanting, Maximus! Maximus!

Arousing a desire for revenge

The story has aroused in us, too, the desire to see revenge done. Of course, this desire for revenge is legitimized by the laudable desire to see an end to the corruption of the Roman citizenry, the restoration of the republic that Aurelius wanted, the elimination of the threat to the beautiful sister of Commodus, and so on. Maximus' revenge is, thus, linked to the restoration of order and justice – the old ways, the old virtues. His desire for revenge has led him to carry out the mandate that his spiritual father, Marcus Aurelius, tried to lay on him just before he was murdered by Commodus.

Yet, in his fall from "sonship" to slavery (for the gladiators are slaves to be slaughtered for public entertainment),

Maximus has ironically become the possession of a former gladiator, who got into the business under Marcus Aurelius. This barbaric, bloody industry is no less a product of the noble philosopher-king than the bloody warfare against the barbarians (Europeans) on the empire's frontier. Even the old order, idealized by Aurelius, was steeped in violence – not just on the frontier but also in the centre of Rome, in the Coliseum.

A much different arena

I'm not sure whether this was done deliberately by the screenwriters. Is the film imbued with the postmodern skepticism toward civilized values and heroism so that it offers no way out? It can certainly be interpreted that way, for it is very questionable whether the sacrifice of the hero actually inaugurates a new order.

The film raises the question whether the very idea of the heroic doesn't create an order infected with violence to its very roots. To excel, to gain recognition, you must strive to outdo everyone, to stand out above the masses. Maximus' virtue as a hero emerges in the spectacle, in the Coliseum, where everyone can see and admire his superiority. This is very ironic, of course, because Commodus stages the gladiatorial games to exhibit his power and majesty.

The film is good because it allows the active Christian viewer to see that true virtue emerges in a much different arena, and it reminds us that our Savior died an unheroic death on the cross precisely to do away with such violent models of excellence.

Television & Movies

Oldies but goodies - and cheap, too!**Jessie Schut**

Your local video store has offers too good to refuse. Offers like five movies for \$6 for seven nights. Or, cheap Tuesdays, when you can pick up a video for 49 cents.

Like any offer that sounds too good to be true, these offers have a catch. The movies are videos you pick out of the "old" racks — movies made more than three or four years ago that are no longer in high demand.

But that's no problem for me. There are literally dozens of movies I wished I'd seen when they were in movie theatres, but never got around to viewing. These cheap thrills appeal to my bargain-hunting nature. Why spend \$8.50 at a theatre for a movie you're not sure you'll like when you can see the same thing a few years later for a fraction of the cost? If it was a good movie way back in 1995, it'll likely still be a good movie five years later.

Thought-provoking movies

Of course, what constitutes a good movie is up for debate. Movies whose main purpose is entertainment, that give you an escape hatch with a few hours of innocent fun, are fine, but personally, I prefer something more. I like movies that deal with relationships, or are thought-provoking, or touch my emotions. Good movies, in my opinion, are like good books: they present interesting stories that capture the imagination, with a believable plot and intriguing characters that wrestle with choices, issues, and difficulties.

Not all movies will have happy endings — because life isn't like that. And sometimes in a movie characters will use foul language or make bad choices — because life is like that. But overall, if the viewer is left with a feeling of hope, or gains insight into the human condition, or is challenged to think about issues and problems, I qualify it as a good movie.

In the last few weeks, I've been checking out the cheap movies. (It's a tough job, but someone has to do it!) Here's a short list of movies in the "recent oldies but goodies" category that I picked up in just two visits. Most weren't block-busters but are, in my opinion, worth watching. And there's lots more just like these:

The House of the Spirits

(*Meryl Streep and Jeremy Irons*): based on a well-known novel by South American writer Isabel Allende, this movie deals with the clash between the old and new ways of life and politics in South America while following a couple from childhood to old age.

Hanna's War

(*Ellen Burstyn, Maruschka Detmers*): At the beginning of the second world war, 25% of Budapest's population was Jewish. Even though Hungary wasn't invaded till 1944, its Jewish population was almost entirely decimated. This true story about an idealistic young Jewish woman trying to rescue her people isn't easy to watch, but it sheds light on a little-known part of history.

Before and After

(*Meryl Streep and Liam Neeson*): What do you do if your 16-year old son is accused of murder and you discover evidence that may convict him? This movie explores how such a situation affects a middle-class family. A good movie to watch and discuss with teens.

The Crucible

(*Daniel Day-Lewis, Wynona Ryder*): The movie version of Arthur Miller's play about the Salem witch trials in pioneer America is a fine piece of work.

The Horse Whisperer

(*Robert Redford, Kristin Scott*): This movie is worth watching just for the beautiful photography of Montana's wide open spaces, and it leaves out all the sex that was so prominent in the best-selling book.

Cold Sassy Tree

(*Faye Dunaway, Richard Widmark*): I loved the book, so had high hopes for the movie version. It didn't measure up, but is still an entertaining story of a May-December romance set in Georgia in 1906.

12 Angry Men

(*George C. Scott, Jack Lemmon*): Twelve men sequestered in a jury room must decide the fate of a young man accused of murder. Excellent acting, fascinating characters, and interesting plot developments make this a top-notch choice.

The Emigrants

(*Max Von Sydow, Liv Ullmann*): A long and earnest look at how a group of Swedish citizens came to North America. History buffs will enjoy it. The sequel is called *The New Land*.

Bonus pick: My favourite free movie viewing came from the library. *A Year in Provence* is based on Peter Mayle's experiences when he gave up his day job to get away from it all in France. The set of four videos (one for each season of the year) were actually a BBC TV series. Great photography, a story told with humour, and interesting characters got me hooked right away.

Here are recommendations from some of our other writers as well:

From David Koyzis:

Wag the Dog

My favourite recent film is Barry Levinson's *Wag the Dog* (1997) with Robert De Niro and Dustin Hoffman. Eerily anticipating the Clinton-Lewinsky affair in the US, the plot concerns the chilling efforts of presidential aides to stage a fictitious Albanian war to divert public attention from a White House sex scandal. The film illustrates how easy it is for a government to manipulate public opinion for disreputable



Robert De Niro (l.) and Dustin Hoffman in *Wag the Dog*.

film scores of his longtime musical collaborator, Bernard Herrmann, are incredibly well crafted and communicate a wide range of intense emotions, ranging from unrequited passion ("Vertigo") to nervous agitation ("North by Northwest") to horror ("Psycho"). Hitchcock was evidently a Roman Catholic, and some observers have noted in his work the continuing themes of good battling evil and the innocent man fleeing injustice. Yet even Hitchcock's fleeing innocents have a certain air of moral ambiguity about them that rings true to experience.

From Mary Hulst-Antonides:

What Dreams May Come

One interesting movie about the after-life is *What Dreams May Come*. This movie can lead into a good discussion about people's hopes and dreams and how those hopes and dreams carry into thoughts about what happens when we die. It is a cinematically beautiful movie, and a great conversation starter!

Simon Birch

Simon Birch is another excellent movie to rent. Two junior high boys, one dealing with his deformity and the other dealing with his status as a bastard, create a deep and abiding friendship. Another beautiful, touching movie with powerful themes throughout.

Keeping the Faith

Keeping the Faith isn't out on video yet, but should be by this fall. A priest and a rabbi are both interested in the same girl, which creates for interesting and humorous situations, but can lead to greater discussions about the meaning of "calling" and ordination and how those weighty concerns impact the choices clergy people make.

From Mary VanderVennen:

Color of Paradise

The Iranian makers of the film *Children of Heaven* have given us another gem in *Color of Paradise*. The story centres around the experiences of a blind boy who leaves his school for the blind in Teheran for summer vacation in the countryside with his grandmother, father and sisters. The plot is fascinating and the characterizations are wonderful.

But underlying the film is the question of who is more limited: the boy who cannot see but hears and feels with his hands and perceives with enormous clarity, or the people (especially the father) who can see but lack understanding and sensitivity. In other words, who is blind? The point is made cinematically in many subtle but powerfully sensuous ways. It is a deeply religious film, and it portrays a wonderful sense of values, all without preaching. If "Color of Paradise" doesn't come to your local theatre, look for it in video.



Movie director Alfred Hitchcock spoofs Hamlet, using a rubber mask to represent "poor Yorick."

Alfred Hitchcock

I will also admit to liking the films of Alfred Hitchcock, who in many respects helped to create the modern cinema with his use of techniques that would be copied by both his contemporaries and his successors. The

Television & Movies

Christian 'survivor' voted off island

PALAU TIGA, Borneo (EP) — Dirk Been, the openly Christian member of "Tagi tribe" on CBS's wildly popular game show "Survivor," was voted off the island on the episode aired June 28.

During their stay on Palau Tiga, an island off of Borneo, two teams of castaways scrounge for food and shelter, while competing against each other in contests that test their survival skills. The winning team of each competition wins supplies and "luxury items" such as pillows and hammocks,

while the losing team must vote one of their own off the island. At the end of the show, only one survivor out of the original 16 will be left, and will win a \$1 million jackpot.

Religious bigotry

"My testimony is something I'm not afraid to share," Been said on-camera during the Survivor episode aired June 14. A substitute teacher from Spring Green, Wis., Been brought his Bible with him to the island and said one of his goals on the trip was "getting closer to

the Lord." Been was shown twice on the show reading his Bible and in prayer.

But despite Been's spectacular performances in physical challenges, religious bigotry led his Tagi teammates to vote him off the island. Richard Hatch, a member of Tagi tribe and a homosexual, said he didn't think Been and he would be close friends because they were on "opposite ends of the spectrum." Fellow teammate Susan Hawk, a truck driver also from Wisconsin, said that Been's "preaching" was

"driving me crazy" on one episode. "It's not that I'm against his faith or nothing," said Hawk, "but he spends all day reading his Bible and praying." And Rudy Boesch, the former Navy SEAL, said, "The only reason I'd bring a Bible out here is if I needed toilet paper." Been was also subjected to teasing from his fellow teammates when he acknowledged he was 23 and still a virgin.

Lion's share of viewers

"Survivor" has garnered a lion's share of TV viewers during the first four episodes, reaching the

coveted number one spot in the Nielsen ratings on June 28, topping ABC's "Who Wants to be a Millionaire?" and game six of the NBA finals. About 24 million homes tuned in watch a previous episode on June 21.

Since the broadcast of his departure, Been has appeared on CBS's "Early Show" and the "Late Show with David Letterman," to talk about his Survivor experience.

"I want to thank the Lord for this unbelievable blessing to be part of this," Been said. "This whole thing has been a wild trip."

Rubber monsters**Andrew Wooding**

YORKSHIRE, England — I've always been a fan of rubber monsters. The dodgier the costume the better. I guess it's all those misspent hours watching sci-fi films from the fifties, or reruns of *The Outer Limits*, and even early *Star Trek*.

Ideally, the monster has to look like a mutated lizard, carry a plastic ray gun, and have yellowing pointed teeth so that it looks like a chronic sufferer of halitosis. Rubber monsters don't believe in fresh breath chewing gum.

chewing a microwaved cheeseburger, filling in a crossword and dreaming of one day auditioning for Hamlet.

That hadn't been a monster down there at all. It seemed like one because of the darkness, but had the lights been on full blast I would have seen it for what it really was: a nervous, skinny actor in a hastily constructed costume that could easily have been made by a group of seven-year-old children during their school lunch break.

Shining light on the Devil

The Devil's like that. He loves it when we live in the darkness, because then he can fool us into thinking that he's really something. "I'm scary!" he says, and we believe it.

But Jesus calls himself "the light of the world". We can have that light in our lives if we follow his ways and get to know him better. And if we shine that light on the devil, we see him for who he really is.

There are no zips on the Devil. No bits of string, and no pieces of sticky tape. But shine God's light on him and you will see a fearful defeated nobody that's all washed up. He might as well be a tiny helpless ant, burning up and shriveling in the light of the powerful sun.

This is the choice that all of us are given: to live in the light, or live in the darkness.

As for me, I'm off down to the video shop to rent another sci-fi film.

Andrew Wooding is a freelance writer living in Yorkshire, England, who has written seven books, edited and written for countless popular comic books, and has written a daily children's serial for UCB Radio, which broadcasts throughout Europe.

Action star Chuck Norris uses stardom to witness his faith

Chuck Norris, star of "Walker, Texas Ranger"

Real men live for Christ

"Real men do live for Christ," the former world karate champion told the magazine. "It is important to make your peace with Christ while the opportunity exists. Life is so fragile that you never know when it's going to be over. It could be over in the blink of an eye, and then it's too late to accept God's gift of salvation."

Norris was raised in a church, and according to his pastor, Jack Graham of Prestonwood Baptist Church in Dallas, the actor has been "discovering more and more what his faith in Jesus Christ means" in recent years. Graham

added, "When you look beyond the surface, you see a man with very deep beliefs."

Norris had a chance to share those beliefs in last year's Christmas episode, co-written by his wife, Gena. "Walker has hundreds of millions of viewers worldwide, and you have somebody who's going to pick up the remote control, turn on the TV,

and there is Walker talking Jesus," she said.

Gena said she and Norris have worked to make prayer a priority in their lives. "Every time a couple is obedient to that — even if it feels awkward at first — it will create a bond between God and the couple where nothing can really come in and shake that relationship. We're avid workout people. We train physically very, very hard. But you need to train your spirit — feed your spirit — more than your body."

Norris acknowledged that many Christians fear eastern religious influences in martial arts, but he told *New Man* that such fears are unfounded. "You have Catholics, Jews, Baptists — people of all different backgrounds and faiths — training in the martial arts," he said. "It's just to help strengthen you as an individual."

This is why one time I was in London I decided to drop in on the Alien War attraction that was just off Piccadilly Circus. Basically, you paid your money at the door and for the next fifteen minutes you were led round a dark underground maze while being threatened at every corner by an out-of-work actor in an alien outfit.

"Should be a laugh," I thought. "Can't wait to see the zips in the costume." The trouble was, it was dark down there. No zips in sight. Not even a plastic tag saying "Made in Hong Kong". The monsters looked real and I've never been more scared in my life.

On the way home I comforted myself with the fact that once the "monster's" shift was over, the out-of-work actor was probably sitting in a cold London dressing room,

Books

Harry Potter: fantasy made visible



Reviewed by Ron Vandenburg

Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire

By J. K. Rowling

Publisher: Raincoast Books

ISBN: 1551923378

Hardcover: 640 pages \$35 (Cdn)

I waited patiently on Saturday, July 8 for it to come. Along with 5.3 million people, I was waiting for my copy of *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*. What would you call the purchasing of a book series by millions of people? A fad, a craze or a phenomenon? The Harry Potter series by J. K. Rowling is now published in 40 languages around the world and has sold 35 million copies. The books are a success with children and adults, with the first three stories in the series spending a total of 100 weeks on the New York Times best-seller list. And you will be seeing more of Harry in the future, as the series of four books expands to seven and as a Harry Potter movie begins production with its inevitable merchandise tie-ins.

Off to Hogwarts

Harry Potter is a small, bespectacled boy with unruly hair

(Don't all boy heroes have unruly hair?). He also has an unusual lightning bolt shaped scar on his forehead. He lives a difficult life with his Aunt Petunia, and Uncle Vernon and their spoiled son Dudley. His aunt and uncle treat him with a combination of disdain, fear and watchfulness.

On his eleventh birthday, Harry receives numerous letters inviting him to the Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry, and he discovers that his parents did not die in a car crash but were killed by Voldemort, a powerful wizard who is greatly feared, but whose magic has been severely crippled. Finding the Hogwarts Express leaving on track 9 3/4, Harry sets off on his new life at Hogwarts, where he learns to be a wizard, but more importantly where he learns about his own past, his family and what lies ahead.

Humor, suspense, mystery

The first four books in the series tell the stories of Harry's first four years at Hogwarts. Each story is filled with humor, suspense, mystery and array of unique characters. Harry with his friends Ron and the ever studious Hermione battle evil while still finding time to attend classes and

study for exams. Under the watchful eye of his mentor and school headmaster Dumbledore, Harry and his friends learn that life is difficult and, as he tells Harry, "It is our choices, Harry, that show what we truly are, far more than our abilities." (*The Chamber of Secrets*, page 245)

Fantasy, wizardry and magic

Choices seem to be the theme here too for us Muggles as well. (Muggles refers to the non-magical characters in the books.) The stories have been described as being part of a tradition of English children's writers such as C.S. Lewis and J.R.R. Tolkien. Some organizations choose to ban the book, citing concerns about the book's unsentimental references to death (Harry Potter is an orphan), the descriptions of violence, and its wizardry and magic.

Good fantasy has always fulfilled the criteria for good literature. Prospero and Caliban, Bilbo Baggins and Smaug, Aslan and the White Witch have become important in our assembly of memorable characters of substance in Western literature.

Fantasy transports us outside our reality to Wonderland, Never Never Land or Willy Wonka's Chocolate Factory, amazing places where anything can happen. Fantasy creates suspense, where adventure strands are woven together leading to an exciting climax. Finally, good fantasy helps us to see reality in the fantastic. Good fantasy asks the universal questions about our own reality. Who am I? Where am I? How am I to live my life?

Appreciating mystery; reading with discernment

That being said, is Harry Potter good fantasy?

Children and adults agree that the characters in Harry Potter are both unique and memorable. It's hard to forget Nearly-Headless Nick the ghost, the surly Professor Snape, or groundskeeper Hagrid who has a passion for flying motorcycles and a love for dragons and other misunderstood creatures. Draco Malfoy is Harry's arch rival who now competes against him at the school sport of Quidditch, but who may have a more sinister role in the future.

Harry himself follows in the tradition of all the boy heroes before him. He has a Tom Sawyer knack for getting in and out of trouble with the teachers of Hogwarts, and he has the Hardy Boy habit of solving the mystery while all others, including adults,

are baffled.

Hogwarts itself lies not in a different world, but right in our own. From track 9 3/4 to Prison of Azkaban, our world is surrounded by magic. All those mysterious things that happen around us Muggles stay mysteries, because the Ministry of Magic hides them so well. Hogwarts is full of secret passageways and portraits that refuse to stay within their frames. And don't forget the owl mail service, a most efficient service that finds you wherever you are.

Fight between good, evil

For the Harry Potter series, J.K. Rowling has stated that the theme is the fight between good and evil. How Rowling defines those roles for her readers may be interesting to watch as the series continues. It has been suggested that in the fourth book an ally of Harry dies.

The evil Voldemort compares himself to Harry, suggesting that the two are very much the same.

Harry's mentor rejects the idea, saying that we are the sum of our choices. The novels refer to love and mercy as some of the deepest magic. Harry also seems to find an inner strength within himself, a

common theme in fantasy literature from *The Wizard of Oz* to *Star Wars*.

Here's where a parent's guidance and a young person's discernment are needed, and fantasy literature can be a jumping point to talk with your young teen about these worldlier issues.

In the first book, Rowling also challenges the reader with the classic theme of desire for absolute power. The second throws us in the middle of prejudice in the world of magic between the pure bloods and the mudbloods, while the third book has us reflect on the need for revenge and the quality of mercy. And the fourth book... Well, that would be telling, wouldn't it?

As Dumbledore says, "The consequences of our actions are always so complicated, so diverse, that predicting the future is a very difficult business indeed..." So it would be difficult to predict where the series and the popularity of the series will go. The stories are strong, well crafted; they challenge the reader to think about the real and imagine the unreal. It's good fantasy. Kids will read, talk about them and learn. That's a mark of good literature.

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Insight

The sheep and the goats

Kevin Tuininga

HAITI — I saw hundreds of goats in Haiti. Most of them were short and stocky with sleek hides stretched tight by full bellies. They were the only breed of livestock not emaciated and scrawny.

The horses were crippled and gaunt, their backbones protruding like dorsal fins except where the vertebrae were worn to bloody nubs by the wooden sugar cane racks they were made to carry. The cattle were tethered in ditches, often forgotten for days, having barely enough vigor to snap their tails or turn their backs to the dusty road.

Feasting on anything

But not the goats. They ranged freely, proud to display their polished horns and dainty hooves. They pranced on the roadsides, butted horns, and scratched their hides on the corners of abandoned brick buildings. Their jutting incisors snipped off grass that was too short for other livestock to graze on. They feasted on almost anything, rooting through garbage, chewing on rags, and picking at thorny weeds.

They were sure-footed and confident because they could go anywhere and digest anything. Goats are kings in Haiti because they can exploit resources that are useless to other animals and people. They know what they want, they get it, and they move on.

Different for people

It's different for the people. There is limited access to clean water, few job opportunities, and little food. Many Haitians pass their days along streets, standing, sitting, or squatting in whatever

position feels most comfortable for the moment. They don't go anywhere because there is nowhere to go. They can't leave the squalor because it's everywhere. They wait.

The airport in the city of Cap Haitian is next to a river lined with wretched slums. Everywhere in Cap Haitian there are slums. When I arrived at the airport, I was welcomed by wafting fumes from every variety of fermenting filth imaginable. Heavy molecules of stench floated around, attached to particles of dust and smoke. There were few places to escape the smells.

When I left the airport, young boys instantly cornered me on the street, asking to carry my bags in exchange for a dollar. The boy nearest me had an ugly boil on his earlobe that was encrusted with dust and swollen from infection. His scalp was spotted with weeping sores and his yellow eyes gave away his poor diet and contaminated water source. Another boy approached me with a torn-off corner of an American Airlines baggage claim sticker taped over a swollen abscess on his forehead. He looked as though he was around five years old, but it was hard to tell because a lot of Haitian children are smaller than normal.

'Don't forget about me'

"Don't forget about me mister," he said.

Haiti was once one of the richest European colonies in the Americas. Now it has no resources to attract any significant investment. The beaches are polluted, the hillsides are dry, and the seas are over-fished. The former white colonizers have left deep footprints



SHANNON OATWAY/CALGARY HERALD
Goats are kings in Haiti because they can exploit resources that are useless to other animals and people.

attaching them to the misery of Haiti's people. The Haitian people are a relocated community of Africans, struggling to survive under the heel of their colonial slave culture.

Most of us don't know the Europeans who directly preyed upon Haiti, but we are inescapably linked to the misery by our skin color and citizenship. We now refer to Haitians as the "less fortunate," rather than slaves or former slaves, but they still bear the scars of our lifestyles. Instead of working on our plantations, Haitians now make our Major League baseballs and sew Loony Tunes paraphernalia. They are condemned to lining pockets of Walt Disney's stockholders and contributing to the great American pastime of professional baseball.

Pity is all we can afford

Most of us feel pity for Haitians, who live so far from our safe American neighborhoods. But pity

is all we can afford to give. Hungry Haitians are too distant for us to take responsibility for their misery. Some of us travel to Haiti with short-term mission teams, sacrificing our time and energy for a week or two. But we fail to make the hidden connections between our wealth and opportunity and Haitian malnourishment and anguish.

The simplicity of people living in poverty has become exceedingly complicated. It's impossible to follow the tangle of cords that keep Haitians trapped in their suffering; the bonds trail far behind us and we don't look back. When we see poverty, we learn to be thankful for what God has "blessed" us with rather than sorry for what we have taken and repentant for what we have not given. We see God speaking through hundreds of volunteers that visit Haiti weekly but not through the children persistently begging for our coins. We give what we want to give rather than what the Haitians need or how

much they need.

Easy to ease consciences

We have discovered that we can separate ourselves from our responsibility if we go somewhere else to see people suffering. It is easy to ease our consciences in Haiti when we know that we can leave in a week or a month. We can sever the line of connection if we feel we have done our duty and learned to be thankful.

After being back from Haiti for one week, I have not yet lost my sense of responsibility. I went to Haiti and left with what I wanted: education and third world experience. When will the Haitians receive what they need? When I eat, dress, or drive, it is often at the expense of the Haitian people or others who live in extreme poverty. It's not an expense suffered today necessarily, but maybe yesterday, or last week, or last century. It is so difficult to make those connections when there are hundreds of people that have their fingerprints on a service I use or a shirt I wear; the fingerprints blur together and become indistinguishable.

We live like goats

Because of those fingerprints, we live like the goats whether we want to or not. We feel helpless because the problems and the distances are so huge. There are so many people and so many years between us and them that we feel the problems can't be fixed — and maybe they can't. But that doesn't remove our responsibility. We have a way to avoid being the goats. We can go to the places where the horses are crippled. We can redraw the connecting lines and we can begin giving clothes instead of old rags and bread instead of dry grass.

"All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats... Then he will say to [the goats] on his left, 'Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, I was a stranger and you did not invite me in, I needed clothes and you did not clothe me... I tell you the truth, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me.'

Matthew 25:30-45 (NIV)

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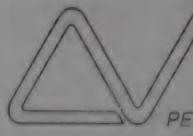
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Kevin Tuininga, born and raised in Neerlandia, AB, is a recent graduate of Dordt College, where he did a stint in Haiti.

Psychology

Out of the dark hole: one Christian's odyssey with bi-polar disorder



COURTESY MICHAEL IRELAND

Nancy Hagerman: a bi-polar disorder survivor.

Michael Ireland

GRAND JUNCTION, Colorado — Nancy Hagerman is a Christian with bi-polar disorder, commonly called manic depression. For almost 40 years she lived in a "black hole, trapped by uncontrollable emotions, and believing myself to be completely unacceptable, even to God."

"It was only when I hit bottom that I quit trying to pick myself up and let God do it. He set me free through a program of medication, counseling, prayer, and learning to listen to his truth rather than my emotions," said Hagerman.

Walking in freedom

"I have been walking in that freedom for over five years. It is my desire to share the same freedom with thousands of other hurting individuals through my book, *In The Pit*. It offers a plan for recovery and an invitation for those in emotional pain to rest in his faithfulness."

In a recent *Focus on the Family* broadcast titled, "When Mental Illness Hits Home," Dr. James Dobson stated, "We pay a lot of attention to our mail and an increasing number of people are

writing us and asking us to address the problem of mental illness."

"The time for a book like this is now," Nancy said.

"There have been some Christian books on the market that do not acknowledge manic depression as an illness," she said. "They treat it as a spiritual problem, when, in fact, it's a chemical imbalance very hard to control with counseling alone. Before I got help, I truly wanted to be the Christian I knew I should be, but found myself unable to manage my emotions. Since my deliverance I have read anything I could find to help me understand this disease. The book has been researched for over six years."

How and why did you write the book? How long did it take you to write it?

"Writing the book came out of my desire to do more public speaking. There are so many people out there that do not comprehend the depths of God's grace. They think they have to make themselves more worthy before they approach him. In my speaking, I try to communicate how special each individual is to God. I felt that I could reach many more by writing the story of his faithfulness to me in book form. I'm hoping the book will also help me get more speaking engagements. It has taken about a year to write, though I was off two to three months for back surgery."

What is the aim or purpose of the book? What do you hope to achieve through the book?

"I want to communicate the exceptional love of God to the down and wounded of the world, especially those struggling with depression or bi-polar disorder. I hope to see many coming to wholeness through renewed trust in Jesus. I also hope to achieve recognition as someone who can understand how it feels to hurt and be invited to speak to groups in order to minister his love."

How long have you struggled with Bi-Polar and how have you coped?

"This book contains my personal testimony. I struggled with bi-polar disorder for almost 40 years. I've attempted suicide and been on the psych ward. Most of the time I spent believing I was the most worthless Christian in the world and there remained no deliverance for me because I could not control my moods."

"The book tells how God was there all along. The second half of the book deals with the steps to

recovery I took. Though I am still bi-polar and remain on medication, I am no longer in bondage to the moods. With God's help I am now much more in control."

The steps are: 1) Remember God loves you. 2) Seek medical help. 3) Exercise and watch your nutrition, 4) Find a reliable friend, 5) Tell yourself the Truth, and 6) Stand firm. The last chapter offers an invitation for those in emotional pain to rest in God's faithfulness."

Nancy is available for speaking to women's retreats, conferences,

camps etc. and to young people. Contact her at: (970) 241-0858 or by e-mail: hagerman@acsol.net or in writing to: 2976 N. Ronlin Ave., Grand Junction, CO 81504.

One of three major mental illnesses

Bi-Polar Disorder is classified as one of the three major mental illnesses of Schizophrenia, Manic Depression and Major Depression. The disorder is characterized by mood swings between depression and mania and is now thought to be caused by a chemical imbalance in the brain. Many new psychotropic

drugs have been entered onto the market for its treatment and those who suffer from Bi-Polar can live a somewhat normal life with proper treatment, including medication, adequate rest, exercise, good nutrition and counseling.

Michael Ireland is a British freelance journalist in Minneapolis, Minnesota, and has himself been diagnosed with Bi-Polar Disorder. A former reporter with a London newspaper, Michael is the Midwest representative of ASSIST Ministries and Senior Correspondent for ASSIST Communications of Garden Grove, CA.

Getting Unstuck

Arlene Van Hove

Lack of understanding equals lack of closeness

"It is not enough," my new found friend grumbled, tossing last month's *Christian Courier* on the chair beside her. She gazes wearily at the summer sun disappearing behind the horizon. "I've been taking responsibility for my feelings for a long time now. And yes, we do manage our lives better. I deal with my issues and he deals with his." She hesitates, "Still, there needs to be more..."

I look at her and notice the fading light casting shadows across her face. She glances my way and her luminous eyes betray her struggle. "I feel lonely and so does he," she confides quietly. The evening breeze begins to cool the summer night air. She shivers and reaches for a sweater. She's right, there needs to be more between couples, between parents and children, and between good friends.

In last month's column I stressed feelings are messages about ourselves in relationship to what is going on around us. I suggested, processing our feelings in effective ways will allow us to be who we are meant to be. All this is so. However, I was not writing about self-sufficient rugged individualism.

Experiencing life differently

God created us as unique individuals with a need for connection through which we are meant to grow. Consequently, in meaningful relationships, a part of processing and working towards effective relationships may be *hearing and validating* where the other person is coming from.

Each of us experiences life differently. How we perceive experiences and issues has to do with where we have come from — which in turn influences our emotional development. Consequently, we have different points of view. Hearing about each other's experiences is therefore an important part of trying to understand one another. Lack of understanding between spouses, parents and children and good friends creates a sense of isolation due to a lack of closeness or bonding.

I think of Peter and Carla. They both have challenging careers. Peter likes routine and order because his boyhood was filled with chaos and change. In the last six months Peter has become

more and more uncomfortable due to major changes in his work place. He often comes home feeling overwhelmed, tired and frazzled. Carla, on the other hand, is an eternal optimist. She is uncomfortable with painful emotions because her mother worked hard at keeping the lid on family upheavals when Carla was growing up.

Peter wants Carla to understand how he feels. Carla, on the other hand, responds in ways that keep her comfortable and she tries to soothe him with streams of positive platitudes. Neither understands where the other is coming from.

Understanding others requires emotional strength

Trying to understand the other requires emotional strength. It means putting our own feelings and viewpoints on hold while listening to the other. Hearing and validating their view does not mean we agree but it does mean we need to meet the other in their space at that moment.

As mentioned before, choosing to be responsible for our feelings will allow us to better understand ourselves as well as others. Choosing to understand our spouses, children, and friends is part of this process. Recognizing and accepting their individuality — however different that may be — can nurture the closeness we need in these important relationships.

There is more

This may be the missing element in my new found friend's relationship with her husband. Acknowledging, understanding and accepting each other's differences could enrich their relationship in such a way that both would feel valued, appreciated and connected — important components of a fulfilling and close relationship. The same prescription goes for Peter and Carla.

Arlene Van Hove is a psychotherapist with Cascade Christian Counselling Association in Surrey, B.C.



**HOME
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STAY HOME WITH US

News Comment



Bert Hielema

IT SEEMS TO BE HITTING closer to home. Something that was unthinkable a decade ago is now commonplace. Both a close relative and a friend have become victims of its diminished effect. Remember when penicillin was the miracle cure? Well, the miracle has become mired through misuse.

In a 65-page report released last month the World Health Organization (WHO) took its first comprehensive look at drug-resistant diseases and concluded that the effectiveness of antibiotics had been so eroded globally that some diseases that were once easily treatable are now often incurable. Misuse of antibiotics, including over-prescribing and using them to increase animal growth, have made treating illnesses as diverse as ear infections, tuberculosis and malaria much more difficult to cure. Says the report: "These drugs, which were once life-saving medicine, have now the curative power of a sugar pill."

In much of Southeast Asia penicillin is no longer effective against an estimated 98 per cent of gonorrhoea, which when untreated spreads the AIDS virus. Says Dr. David Heymann, one of the authors: "It took 20 years to develop penicillin for medical use, and it also took 20 years for this drug to become virtually useless for treating gonorrhoea in most parts of the world. If we had not eradicated smallpox in 1980, we probably couldn't today." Efforts to combat the world's biggest killer, pneumonia, which killed 3.5 million people in 1998, are being undermined because 80 per cent of respiratory infections are treated with unnecessary medications. In

the U.S.A. alone 14,000 people are infected and die each year from drug-resistant microbes picked up in hospitals.

Pretty scary stuff. Avoid hospitals. Even better, don't get sick: it is becoming too dangerous for your health.

SO WILL THE CRACKING OF THE CODE BRING relief? The Code? What Code? The 3.1 billion biochemical 'letters' of human DNA; the coded instructions for building and operating a fully functional human. That code. It has been tabulated. Says *TIME* magazine: "It's impossible to overstate the significance of this achievement. Armed with the genetic code, scientists can now start teasing out the secrets of human health and disease at the molecular level — secrets that will lead at the very least to a revolution in diagnosing and treating everything from Alzheimer's to heart disease to cancer. In a matter of decades, the world of medicine will be utterly transformed, and history will mark this as the ceremonial start of the genomic era."

For the official announcement President Clinton, flanked by the two prominent scientists behind this enterprise, hooked up on television with Tony Blair of Britain. Clinton, never lost for words, said: "It is now conceivable that our children's children will know the term cancer only as a constellation of stars. We are learning the language in which God created life."

WELL, MR. CLINTON, not so fast. I don't think that the companies financing this project care too much about God and how he created life. They see dollar signs here, the universal language of trade. God doesn't care about money, but he does care about life, even imperfect life, which includes us all. The companies behind this project — in itself a worthwhile and necessary venture — want no government regulations, no restraints, but want to be free to sell their expertise in

manipulating human genes so that they can make a buck. Billions of dollars have been spent so far. Sins wants a return of about 20 per cent; so it will concentrate its efforts to find cures for the illnesses of the rich West — cancer and heart disease — while those of the poor South — malaria and tuberculosis — get short shrift.

BUSINESS AND SCIENCE — the two are more and more becoming the same thing, as much of the research is paid by business — have their own agenda. This is ruled by the erroneous assumption that most diseases, mental or physical, are caused by genetic defects, which can be cured by scientific methods. They see human beings, all living things, to be no more than information-processing machines. This allows them to avoid or discard disturbing questions about the nature of most modern ailments. Most are not caused by human imperfection but by poverty, industry-generated toxins and stressful work situations.

QUESTIONS ABOUND. What if insurance companies want their new clients to undergo genetic tests for chronic and costly diseases? Will they then refuse coverage or levy an impossible premium? What if we find a gene that contributes to homosexuality? Should parents try to remove it, so their son can become a minister in the Christian Reformed Church? A doctor I know says her 10-year-old boy likes to dress up in girls' clothes and carry a purse. She doesn't mind if he turns out to be a homosexual, but knows that his life will be much more difficult because of it.

But removing a gene — even the homosexual one — is akin to abortion: we kill part of a person's original make-up. If God had wanted us to be different, we would have been conceived a second earlier or later: that would have given us a totally new personality. Suppose we pinpoint the genetic component to intelligence. Should we be able to manipulate the genetic make-up of children to make them super-clever?

Just imagine the schizophrenia it might create! The battle between the old self and the unnatural new one! God created the cosmos in a certain order: first the universe, then the plants and animals and only then, when everything was perfect, he fashioned humankind from the substance of the Earth. Adam. Earthman. God knows and

we know — even though we tend to forget it — that from its very beginning humans could never be understood apart from the totality of creation. So God wants us to be what we are. Says Paul: "Whenever I am weak — fully aware of all my genetic hang-ups and deficiencies — then I am strong."

In the end, no matter what governments legislate, it all is a matter of money and so it is more than likely that only the rich will be able to afford such gene-tampering. Let them experiment with letting this genie out of the bottle.

TALKING ABOUT A person who did just that, reminds me of Arie van der Spek, an inhabitant of Europe's biggest harbor city. His was the truck which contained 58 bodies of Chinese stowaways, piled up behind stacks of crates filled with tomatoes from the greenhouses in "t Westland", that region of greenhouses between Rotterdam and The Hague.

Five days before that fateful trip, the man had incorporated a new trucking company, thinking that he could make a quick killing in that business. On the first load he accomplished that, although not exactly the kind he was after. The 18 metre long refrigerated truck, with the cooling turned off on a 30+ Celsius day, was flagged for inspection because the driver had paid cash for the ferry trip. This was unusual, since most trucks have a running account with the ferry company, and the name of the firm was unknown to customs. It was also a Sunday night with the truck traffic light, only 40 trucks on the Dover-bound freight ferry, which can carry 140. So Arie gambled that there would be no inspection that night.

It is estimated that about 20 different criminal groups are actively involved in bringing illegal immigrants into Britain, where they are forced into service jobs at low wages, out of which they have to repay their ransom of up to \$30,000 per head. Once in London, they melt away into Chinatown, which houses about 150,000 of their fellow citizens, the largest Chinese concentration in the Western World.

FORTRESS EUROPE. Fortress North America. Television can be viewed world-wide and it always portrays an exaggerated view of our wealth and health. No wonder people from Africa, Eastern Europe, India, China want to have a piece

of our pie. Up to 50 years ago North America as well as Australia and South America, had room to spare for the surplus humanity in Europe. I am one of them.

But now the world is full, too full, judging by the pollution we generate and the species we keep on destroying at an ever faster rate. In spite of the Code, we could soon share that fate with the other disappearing creatures. Is that — fewer people through sickness and premature death — the answer to over population? What is the answer?

For criminals the answer is clear: keep on smuggling them to the wealthy West at ever greater cost of money and human life. The International Organization for Migration estimates that roughly 400,000 people are smuggled into Western Europe alone each year. Each year one million Chinese try to leave their country. Illegal entry into the U.S.A. and Canada has also risen, judging by the increasing numbers caught at the border from 138,000 in 1997 to 247,000 last year, mostly from Mexico.

WHEN YOU READ THIS, I presume that Stockwell Day is the Alliance Party new leader. I am trying to gauge Stockwell Day's philosophy, and perhaps looking at Margaret Thatcher might provide the answer. At the height of her axing the welfare rolls, she was asked: "What is the essence of your Christian religion?" (She is a devout church-woman). The interviewer wanted to pounce on her if she said "Love," the answer Jesus told us. But she didn't. She said: "Choice," a typical Old Testament answer, echoing Moses when he gave the law: "Choose the law and life." (Deut. 30). Mrs Thatcher chose the law alright and laid it down.

Will Stockwell Day give the same answer? Does he also think that the poor are poor by choice and that those who are Christians and rich are such because they want to be Christian and rich? I see Christianity more and more falling into the trap of legalism, the much easier way to serve God. Just follow the rules — mostly man-made — and bingo, you go to heaven. Jesus did not quite approve of that, judging by the scorn he heaped on the heads of the lawyers and professional Scripture interpreters.

Bert Hielema each week prepares the bulletin for his church, a small and struggling congregation, the way it should be. He lives in Tweed, Ont.

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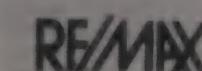


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Classified Rates	Wedding	Anniversaries
<p>As of May 1999: Note: 7% GST will be added to all prices listed below.</p> <p>DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION <i>Christian Courier</i> is published on alternate Mondays. Copy deadline for each issue is 8:30 a.m. Tuesday, nine business days prior to publication.</p> <p>RATES All personal and family announcements: \$16.00 per column inch (pci) + GST (columns are two inches wide). Display advertising re.: businesses and organizations: minimum \$18.20 pci + GST, depending on design and frequency.</p> <p>PHOTOS There is a processing fee of \$25 for the inclusion of a photograph with a personal or family announcement. Photo space is not charged pci, but we reserve the right to determine published photo size. Please note that we cannot use a faxed photo. We need either an original (which we will return) or a downloadable Internet image.</p> <p>PERSONAL ADS <i>Christian Courier</i> would be pleased to handle your personal ad in an efficient and discreet manner. The cost to set up a personal file under a unique file number is \$35. Ads requesting correspondence with this file are run at \$16 pci per insertion. All correspondence is immediately forwarded unopened.</p> <p>NEWLYWEDS & NEW PARENTS We offer a \$25 one-year subscription to couples whose wedding is announced in <i>Christian Courier</i> and to parents who announce the birth of a child in our paper. Please let us know when placing your ad that you want to take advantage of this offer.</p> <p>SUBMITTING YOUR AD mail: Christian Courier #4 - 261 Martindale Road St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1 fax: 905-682-8313 email: ccadpromo@aol.com</p> <p>OTHER INFORMATION a) <i>Christian Courier</i> reserves the right to print classifieds using our usual format. And editing style. b) Please provide us with clear copy. <i>Christian Courier</i> is not responsible for any errors due to hand written or phoned-in advertisements.</p>	<p>Wedding</p>  <p>Please rejoice with us as parents, Rev. David & Joanne Tigchelaar of Grimsby, Ontario and Rev. William & Ruth Verhoeft of Denver, Colorado, in the union as one in Christ of their children</p> <p>Monique Joy Tigchelaar and Paul William Verhoeft on Saturday, the 29th of July, 2000, at the Third Reformed Church, 111 West Thirteenth St., Holland, Michigan. <i>To Him be the glory forever!</i></p> <p>Birthday</p> <p>HAPPY BIRTHDAY! DAD AND GRANDPA. Aaron, Alan, Alena, Alyssa, Annette, Bette-Ann, Carla, Cathy, Colin, Corey, David, George, Gerald, Harold, Ivan, Janine, Jody, Laura, Leah, Lynn, Mark, Pieter, Sarah, Sylvia, Theo, Tim, Timon, Tom and Trudy. See you Saturday! ☺!</p> <p>Anniversaries</p> <p>Arum, Friesland Wallaceburg, Ont. 1940 August 7 2000 With joy and thanksgiving to our Heavenly Father, we hope to celebrate the 60th wedding anniversary of our parents, grandparents and great-grandparents</p> <p>HOMME and JETSKE BROUWER (nee HESLINGA) Congratulations and love: Bram & Alice Brouwer — Wallaceburg, Ont. Sky & Devy (Fiancee) Melia & Ron Kip & Susan Aaron & Kris Jeremy & Alana Keith & Aafke DePooter — Nepean, Ont. Scott & Marika Natalya & Laurence Krista & Blake (friend) Fred Brouwer — Cold Lake, Alta. Danielle & Jason Barry & Keri (friend) Meghan Also 10 great-grandchildren.</p> <p>Please join us in celebrating this happy occasion at an Open House on Saturday August 12, 2000, at the Wallaceburg Christian Reformed Church Fellowship Hall, 150 Bruinsma Ave., from 2-4 p.m. Home Address: 5 McKee Rd., Wallaceburg, ON N8A 4P9</p>	<p>Anniversaries</p>  <p>1960 July 9 2000 With thankfulness to our God we share in the joy of our parents NEIL and JOAN SPIER (nee WUST) as they celebrate their 40th wedding anniversary. May the Lord continue to bless you in the years to come as He has in the past. Love from your children and grandchildren: Wil & Connie Peereboom Rick, Nicole, Michael John & Yvonne Colyn David, Aaron Dwayne & Debbie Hipkiss Danton, Darcy Brian & Claudette Spier Zephany An Open House was held on Sunday, July 9, 2000. Home address: 4088 Atlas Place, Victoria, BC V8Z 2G6</p> <p>1950 August 3 2000 Hemelum, Fr. the Netherlands</p> <p>It is with great joy that we announce the double 40th wedding anniversary of our parents and grandparents</p> <p>ARCHIE & LUCY HENDRIKS (nee WIND) LOUW & TJIJSKE MULDER (nee WIND)</p> <p>God has blessed us with parents, who by their strong Christian example and unfailing love, have been role models and blessings in the lives of their children and grandchildren. They have also reached out and touched the lives of so many others. We love you and pray and hope for many more years together</p> <p>In Canada: Pat Andy & Lucille Ray & Doreen Jane & Rusty and seven grandchildren</p> <p>In the Netherlands: Ane & Liesbeth Jan Sanne & Annelies Gerrit Louwrens & Aleita Fritz Atze & Sietske and 12 grandchildren</p> <p>An Open House will be held on August 5th, 2000, at Durham Christian Homes, 100 Glen Hill Dr. S., Whitby, Ont. 10th floor reception room from 1-4 p.m. Best wishes only.</p> <p>Church News</p> <p>Christian Reformed Church</p> <p>Call extended: Westmount CRC, Strathroy, to Candidate John Bouwers, Calvin Seminary graduate.</p>
		
		<p>1950 August 1 2000 REV. TYMEN & JACOBA (Cobi Jorritsma) HOFMAN 2705 Burton SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49546.</p> <p>Their children, Jim & Bev, Ron & Heidi, Ken & Sandy, and 12 grandchildren thank them for their many years of love and service to us and God's church in North America.</p> 

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Anniversary	Obituaries	Miscellaneous
	<p>SOPHIA CAROLINA GULDEMONT (nee VAN DER SPEK) Boskoop, the Neth. Ancaster, Ont. May 30, 1920 - June 26, 2000 "I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride, beautifully dressed for her husband, and I heard a loud voice from the throne saying: 'He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.'" (Rev. 21:2 & 4). Relieved from her undermining sickness, Sophia passed on to be with Jesus, her Lord and Savior. Beloved wife of 56 years to Marinus (Maurice). Loved mother of: Adrian & Mary Guldemont — Ancaster, Ont. Marcel, Lawren, Wesley, Vanessa David & Connie Hargrave — Nanaimo, B.C. Walter & Marietta Raybould — Ancaster, Ont. Alexander, Cathrine John & Gloria Guldemont — Waterloo, Ont. Amanda, Bradley, Katrina A funeral service took place June 29, 2000, in the Christian Reformed Church of Ancaster, with Rev. Raymond J. Sikkema of Hamilton officiating. Private interment was at Queen's Lawn Cemetery, Grimsby. Correspondence address: 175 Fiddler's Green Rd., Unit 56, Ancaster, ON L9G 4X7 Obituaries Today Website: www.obituariestoday.com</p>	<p>For a quick Letter to the Editor: send e-mail to: cceptor@aol.com or fax 905-682-8313</p>
Congratulations to Luke & Trudy Wolthuis on their 40th wedding anniversary.		<p>ALL NATIONS CRC IN HALIFAX, N.S. is looking for a person to establish a mentoring ministry. This program seeks to establish supportive relationships between members of the congregation and people in need; 15 hrs./wk. Deadline for applications is October 1, 2000. Send letters and resumes to: All Nations CRC 2535 Robie St., Halifax NS B3K 4N3 fax: 902-429-6460 For more info: www.allnationscrc.org</p>
LUKE and TRUDY WOLTHUIS on July 20, 2000.		
Obituaries		
<p>CHRISTINE GLORIA PASVEER On May 5, 2000, our fourth covenant child was born. After a brief struggle, God, in his infinite wisdom called His little one home to glory. Though she was with us for only so short a time, Christine is lovingly remembered by her parents, Kevin & Joan Pasveer, sister Meagan, brothers, Ryan and Matthew; grandparents Hank & Gerrie Pasveer of Calgary and Bill & Audrey Noordhof of Lacombe, Alta.; great-grandfather, Frank Wassenaar of Lacombe, and many aunts, uncles and cousins. We do not always understand God's plan, but we confess with the psalmist: "All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be." (Psalm 139:16) Kevin & Joan Pasveer, 584 Midridge Dr. SE, Calgary, AB T2X 1B9</p>	<p>Hoogvliet, the Neth. Dunnville, Ont. April 1907 - June 2000 Psalm 27 <i>The Lord is my light and my salvation.</i> On June 26 the Lord in His mercy took peacefully to Himself our beloved father, grandfather, great- and great-great-grandfather</p> <p>ARIE STRUIJK in his 94th year. Predeceased by his first wife of 46 years Egberdina Nijland (1974) and by his second wife for 19 years Hilda De Ruyter (1996). Lovingly remembered by his children: Willemina & Albert (†1993) Bakker — Mt.Hope, Ont. Peter & Henny Struyk — Caistor Centre, Ont. Riek & Tom Schenk — Georgetown, Ont. George & Ada Struyk — Cochrane, Ont. Harry & Jenny Struyk — Bancroft, Ont. Egbert & Trudy Struyk — Listowel, Ont. Henry & Grace Struyk — Dunnville, Ont. Cornelis & Janice Struyk — Troy, Ont. Pearl & Albert Postma — Cayuga, Ont. William & Sandra Struyk — Troy, Ont. Bert & Effie Struyk — Gorrie, Ont. 56 grandchildren, 104 great-grandchildren and 3 great-great-grandchildren. Funeral services were held at Grace Reformed Church in Dunnville, Ont., on June 29th, with Rev. Richard Stienstra officiating. Correspondence may be directed to: Henry & Grace Struyk, 168 Logan Rd., Dunnville, ON N1A 2W7</p>	<p>With your deposits we are able to give preferred financing to Kingdom Causes like</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Churches • Christian schools • Christian homes for the elderly and the handicapped <p>We currently have commitments and loans to Kingdom Causes of \$6 million and total assets of \$40 million</p> <p>• • •</p> <p>In addition to offering great rates on deposits, we shared with our members over \$300,000 in profits last year</p> <p>CALL US TODAY for a competitive quote and help build our Christian Community</p> <p>780 426 7165 Toll Free 1-877-426-0506 (Canada Wide)</p> <p>10704 107 Avenue Edmonton, Alberta T5H 0W8</p> <p>Christian Credit Union Ltd.</p> <p>Deposits 100% Guaranteed</p>  

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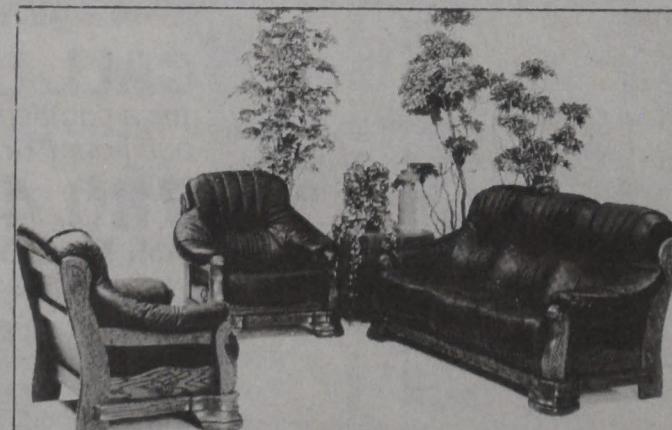
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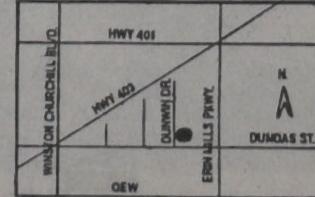
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MANOAH MANOR

has immediate openings for those in need of:
Intermediate Care
Respite Care
Transitional Care

Do you need assistance with the care of an elderly parent/spouse? Are you looking for temporary relief from the ongoing demands of providing care for a loved one? Do you require alternate arrangements for holidays? Please give us a call. We may also be able to help out with temporary Transitional Care, after illness or hospitalization. Each application will be reviewed individually.

Manoah Manor is a 10 bed private Intermediate Care home for the elderly, operated by the Canadian Reformed Senior Citizens' Home Society in **Langley, B.C.** The home provides an atmosphere of spiritual and cultural unity in a setting where residents receive care as needed, and support from each other, family, staff and fellow church members. Most of our staff speak and/or understand Dutch. Some restrictions may apply.

For further information, please contact Gerda Jacobi at 604-530-9895, as soon as possible.

Miscellaneous



Holland Charters to Holland

at discounted prices.
Car rental from \$160/week

Valentine - Insignia Travel

10 Kingsbridge Garden Circle
Mississauga, ON L5R 3K6
905-890-5333 or 1-800-268-6144
London 519-472-2700 or 1-800-265-1141
St. Catharines 905-935-9103



Events/Classifieds**Calendar of Events**

Items appearing in this column are run free of charge if they advertise an admission-free event, if they accompany an ad for the same event, or at the discretion of CC. In case of free listing, space limitations apply. The charge otherwise is \$7.50 per line, or \$1.50 per 1/3 line, per insertion.

- Aug. 4-7** Institute for Christian Studies' Alberta Family Conference, "Story Time for God's People" with James C. Schaap. **Deer Valley Meadows**, Alta. Call 780-475-8031 for details or visit www.icscanada.edu.
- Aug. 4-7** First CRC of **Rocky Mountain House**, Alta. is having a church campout as part of their 50th Anniversary celebrations. For more information, call 403-845-6067. (#)
- Aug. 11-14** Institute for Christian Studies' Ontario Summer Conference: "Written Not with Ink: Living the Biblical Story," Maple Grove Christian Retreat Centre, **Thamesford**, Ont. Call 416-979-2331 for details or visit www.icscanada.edu.
- Aug. 12-13** **Brooks**, Alta. CRC 50th Anniversary celebration weekend. Church picnic on Sat., commemorative services on Sun. Please RSVP to Lis if you plan to attend at 403-378-4571 or lyzenga@eidnet.org
- Aug. 27** Dutch service, 3 p.m., Ancaster CRC, Hwy. 53, **Ancaster**, Ont. - Rev. Kuntz preaching. (#)
- Sep. 2-3** **Cochrane**, Ont. CRC, 50th Anniversary celebration. (For info see display ad in July 10 issue of CC.) (#)
- Sep. 16** "Life After Carismania," free seminar with Ted Brooks, Fantasyland Hotel - Conference Centre, **West Edmonton Mall**. For info call Victoria Life Church, Westlock Alta. 1-800-816-8378. (#)
- Sept. 17** A Special 50th Anniversary Worship, 10 a.m., First CRC, **Toronto**, Ont.. For more information of Anniversary celebrations, call 416-481-4912. (#)
- Oct. 1** Dutch service, 3 p.m., Ancaster CRC, Hwy. 53, **Ancaster**, Ont. - Rev. J. Hoytema preaching. (#)
- Oct. 7-8** Thanksgiving weekend 50th Anniversary celebrations, First CRC, **Toronto**, Ont. For more information, call 416-481-4912. (#)
- Oct. 7-8** First CRC of **Barrie**, Ont. 50th Anniversary celebrations. Thanksgiving dinner and program on Saturday, Services at 10:30 a.m. & 7 p.m. on Sunday. For more info, call 705-734-9166. (#)
- Oct. 7-9** Thanksgiving weekend 50th Anniversary celebrations, First CRC of **Rocky Mountain House**, Alta. For more information, call 403-845-6067. (#)
- Oct. 9-15** First CRC of **Abbotsford**, B.C. 50th Anniversary Celebrations. Call 604-859-5908. (ad July 10 issue)(#)
- Oct. 11** The First CRC of Ladner B.C. - 50th Anniversary Service - 8 p.m., **Delta**, B.C.
- Nov. 3** Christian Festival Concert under the direction of Leendert Kooij, Roy Thomson Hall, **Toronto**. \$25/\$20/\$15 Call 416-636-9779. (See ad in this issue of CC.) (#)

THANKFULLY CELEBRATING GOD'S FAITHFULNESS**FIRST C.R.C. OF ABBOTSFORD, BC
50TH ANNIVERSARY****Thanksgiving week - October 9 - 15, 2000****Special services:**

Thanksgiving Monday, October 9

Sunday, October 15

Dinner & Program:

Friday, October 13

A book highlighting the past 50 years will be available.**All friends & former members are hereby cordially invited to join us in our celebration!**

If you plan to attend the dinner program or would like to get a copy of our Anniversary book, please call the church secretary, Hilda Tuin, at 604-859-5908 before October 1, 2000.

Christian Festival Concert 2000**Roy Thomson Hall****Friday, November 3**

@ 7:30 p.m.

by the **Ontario Christian Music Assembly**

with special guests

Maya Roodveldt, soprano & Ruud Fiselier, tenor

Dirk Out & Andre Knevel, organ & piano

under the direction of

Leendert Kooij

Tickets \$25.00 / \$20.00 / \$15.00

Order from: Ontario Christian Music Assembly
90 Topcliff Ave., Downsview, ON M3N 1L8
Call (416)636-9779 for tickets or info.**NEW****Christian Reformed World Relief Committee (CRWRC)
Position Opening - PLANNING ASSOCIATE**

The Christian Reformed Church in North America (CRCNA) – Burlington office has a full-time opening for a **"Planning Associate"** at the **Christian Reformed World Relief Committee**. CRWRC is an agency of the CRCNA, engaged in community development, relief and social justice. This position is under the Development Team, and is responsible for preparing proposals and reports for funding by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), maintaining CIDA requirements and relationships, exploring other sources of grant funding, monitoring and evaluating CRWRC projects, and contributing to the development of field technical resources and expertise.

A Bachelor's degree and three years of experience in international development required; overseas experience an asset; ability to work on a team; demonstrated computer skills essential; some international travel required.

A detailed job description is available upon request. For consideration, please submit a letter of interest along with a resume by July 31, 2000, to:

Director of Personnel**Christian Reformed Church in North America****P.O. Box 5070****STN LCD 1****Burlington, ON L7R 3Y8****Fax 905-336-8344****Email: coleman@crcna.org****CENTENNIAL CHRISTIAN SCHOOL
TERRACE, B.C.****TEACHING POSITIONS OPEN**

Centennial Christian School invites applications to fill a teacher opening in the area of French. This position involves teaching French at the Grade 7-11 level with Grade 12 added the following year. This position may also involve teaching duties in other areas.

Centennial Christian School is an inter-denominational school and presently offers Christian education to approximately 240 students in Kindergarten - Grade 10. **Grade 11 is being added in September 2000, and Grade 12 in September 2001.** This has created new openings as stated above. Please contact the principal or vice-principal for further details and send letter of application, resume and other information to:

Centennial Christian School**Frank Voogd - Principal****Curtis Tuininga - Vice-principal****3608 Sparks St., Terrace BC V8G 2V6****phone: 250-635-6173 fax: 250-635-9385****e-mail:ccs@telus.net**

For I seek not to understand in order that I may believe; but I believe in order that I may understand, for I believe for this reason: that unless I believe, I cannot understand.

... Anselm of Canterbury

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News

Formerly homeless man starts handcrafters' guild

Alan Doerksen

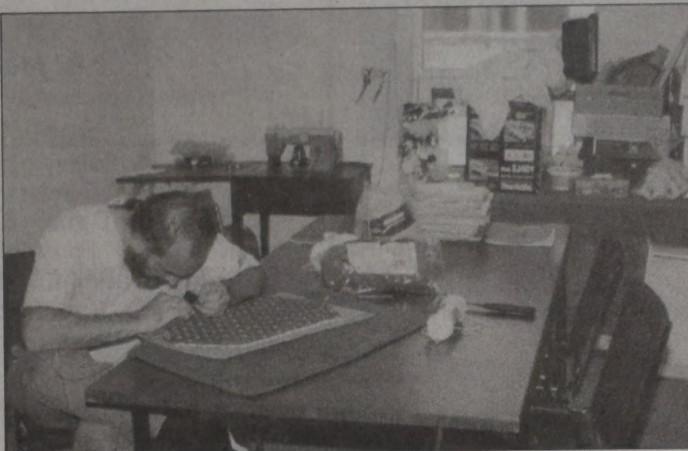
ST. CATHARINES, Ont. — A man who was homeless for nine years has started a Handcrafters' Guild in St. Catharines, Ont., with the hope of helping other homeless people get established in craftsmanship.

The guild got started partly as a result of the St. Catharines Out of the Cold program, in which local churches provide a place to sleep and hot meals to homeless and low income people during the cold winter months. Carlton Bingleman, who used to be homeless, was a frequent guest at Out of the Cold for several years. That's where he got to know Susan Venditti, the program's co-ordinator.

Venditti, who is Roman Catholic, is also the St. Catharines Cathedral's Out of the Cold program co-ordinator. Besides that, she is the site co-ordinator for Start Me Up, a program of the National Network for Mental Health which is funded by Human Resources Development Canada. Start Me Up assists entrepreneurial mental health survivors as they establish their own businesses. This assistance includes helping clients focus on an idea, write a business plan, and providing ongoing support — including limited financial support — to maintain a business once it is established. Currently, Start Me Up is working in four locations in Canada, including St. Catharines.

Venditti appreciated Bingleman's input and advice about Out of the Cold. "He pointed out areas that needed changing," she says. "Last Christmas, he brought in the idea of a Handcrafters' Guild." As co-ordinator of Start Me Up, Venditti was able to "access a little money [and] provide the necessary services" to get the guild off the ground.

"The guild is going to make income for crafters," says Venditti. Besides that, the guild can help its



ALAN DOERKSEN PHOTOS

Carlton Bingleman does needlework at the Handcrafters' Guild.

participants build on their talents and make networking connections.

Out of the Cold connection

Bingleman says Venditti "during the last four years was very instrumental in bringing in more street awareness to the volunteers of the Out of the Cold program, so they would understand what they were doing and how it was actually affecting people. My perspective was from the bottom looking up, and theirs was from the top looking down. That kind of brought them to an even keel on it."

"Susan was very interested in my perspective and asked me to become involved in Start Me Up, on the advisory committee level.... She allowed me to develop the means to get this idea researched and brought into reality."

Venditti does not see a direct connection between the guild and the Out of the Cold program. "I see Out of the Cold as an emergency short-term solution to homelessness," she asserts. "I see having a Handcrafters' Guild as something people can come to and connect with." It's an example of "community economic development at the street level."

The St. Catharines Out of the Cold program wants to focus on feeding and providing overnight stays for homeless and low-income guests, says Venditti. But, she adds, "Everyone at the program wants to take people forward."

But Bingleman would like to see a closer connection between the guild and Out of the Cold. "I very much want to help people," says Bingleman. "We're looking at trying to bring the guild and the making of crafts into the Out of the Cold program, as a means of trying to help people do something to get them motivated and help to get them off the streets and away from being homeless."

Venditti is now on the board of the guild, as its treasurer.

"Start Me Up has been a lot of assistance," says Bingleman, who started the guild in January. "They provided this room [at an office building in downtown St. Catharines] for the initial stages of it, till I get established."

Hodgepodge of crafts

Already, the guild has 19 members and a six-member board of directors, reports Bingleman. He does some crocheting, cross-stitch and some woodworking. Other guild members do "tote-painting, beadwork for jewelry, sewing... a hodgepodge."

Two members of the guild are currently homeless, says Bingleman. Recently, he and the guild helped one homeless person to escape from life on the street. "We have been instrumental in helping someone get themselves motivated enough that they're doing something and they've got themselves into the assistance program [welfare]. They are living in a place now, and they come volunteering here two days a week, as part of their criteria for being on assistance."

So far, the guild has done some



Examples of crafts produced by members of the guild.

marketing of its products. "I've had a couple of sales from here — people who I've invited to drop by or given a business card to," says Bingleman. Other people have donated goods for the guild to sell.

Besides this, Bingleman says, "I have a craft table every Thursday at Shipman's Cafe, downstairs. The lady who co-owns it has been very instrumental in helping me set up craft tables in various other places on a biweekly basis."

Developing differently

Bingleman observes that the guild has developed in a way slightly different from what he originally had in mind. "When you develop anything, the kernel of an idea, you do research," he explains. "When you actually get into the ground level work of it, you find it starts taking a direction of its own. So, I've put together a board to try to handle the changes. In some ways, we're progressing exactly as I thought, but in many other ways, a lot of new things have crept in."

For instance, membership of the guild is now "what I was expecting — around the 20 mark," says Bingleman. "But I wasn't expecting so many different needs and requirements from such a relatively small group. It has thrown us into some different directions."

Plans for expansion

Bingleman would like to expand the guild in the future, but cautions, "First I want to get us running and established here in St. Catharines. I've already got people in Welland, Beamsville and Niagara Falls who are interested in participating from a distance.... But I don't want to be working on multiple sites in the developmental stages."

In its mission statement, the guild commits itself to the following goals:

- to create a source of extra income;
- to provide a means for crafters to access a broader market, and to show their craft originality and creativity to others;
- to make available the materials, equipment, resources and skills needed to make crafting enjoyable and profitable;
- to create a means by which crafters earn recognition for their efforts;
- to encourage persons toward a view of self-dependency and control in their lives.

News Digest

A \$10,000 tip

CHICAGO — What's the appropriate tip on a \$9 drink? Maybe one or two dollars? But waitress Melanie Uczen got a whopping \$10,000 (US) tip, according to the *Welland Tribune*. That's what a doctor with a British accent left her after buying a round of Long Island iced tea drinks while out with friends at an upscale lounge in Chicago.

The lucky waitress received the tip after she told the unidentified man she wanted to do further studies after getting a Bachelor's degree in therapy, recreation and psychology from Illinois State University. Unfortunately, Uczen was unable to cash the cheque, but her boss liked the publicity so much he has offered to help pay for her education.

Schmoozing in Yiddish

LOS ANGELES — People who have never studied Yiddish use it all the time, because colloquial English is speckled with words from the language, which is a mixture of German, Hebrew and Slavic. Yiddish is an essential part of Jewish cultural and religious history, according to *The Joys of Yiddish*, written by Leo Rosten (McGraw-Hill, 1968). Here are a few Yiddish words you might recognize:

- Chutzpah is Hebrew for "audacity";
- Glitch comes from the German *glitschen*, meaning "to slide or slip on a slippery surface";
- Schmooze, from the Hebrew *shmuos*, is idle talk or gossip.

Sealand: a rebel nation

LONDON, Eng. (AP) — The principality of Sealand, founded in 1967, is a rebel nation consisting of a Second World War gun platform anchored to the seabed about 10 km off England's east coast. Its head of state is Prince Roy — Roy Bates — a retired British army major who adopted his title after hoisting a red, white and black flag over the fortress in 1967.

The British government insists that Sealand, which was set up by Britain in 1940 as a base to shoot down Nazi bombers and abandoned after the war, is still part of the UK. But authorities concede that no decision has yet been made about how to enforce the law on the maverick sea fortress.